



# LINKages

CONNECTING GENERATIONS

Annual Report  
09  
10

Building  
Communities  
for *All Ages*



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# A Letter

## Letter from the Board of Directors

Between 1999 and 2016, it is estimated that there will be a 60-70% increase in the number of seniors, which is considerably higher than the projected 30% increase of the overall population in Alberta. It is further estimated that the percentage of seniors will grow to between 13% and 14.5% of Alberta's total population, resulting in approximately 500,000 seniors in Alberta. Therefore, as the population of seniors continues to rise, LINKages will continue to develop unique opportunities for seniors and youth, particularly those who are considered vulnerable. These opportunities will help them to: maintain their sense of community; enjoy companionship; exchange life experiences; provide opportunities to share knowledge and talents; and to make valuable contributions to each other. By addressing the generational strengths, LINKages meets the needs of both populations and provides positive interactions that contribute to a healthy society.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, volunteers, youth, seniors and staff at LINKages, we thank you for your ongoing support and belief in connecting generations.

Sincerely,

*Debra Bray-Armstrong*  
Executive Director

*Bernadette Alexander*  
Board Chair

### Our Vision

LINKages' vision is a community where youth and older adults connect for social contact, support and learning.

### Our Mission

LINKages will foster interactions that promote friendships and understanding between youth and older adults.



“ Our friendships connect us to another generation, we have begun to see the world through somebody else's eyes, to feel what they feel, to truly appreciate and honour their company. ”

- Student Participant

# The Benefits

## The Benefits

### Benefits of LINKages Intergenerational Programs

LINKages aims to:

- Strengthen communities to become more age-friendly by breaking down barriers between generations.
- Promote understanding, respect and sharing of ideas, knowledge, and experiences.
- Teach the young about aging while teaching the aged about youth.
- Nurture careers in health care and a lifelong commitment to volunteerism among youth.
- Improve health outcomes and quality of life for the elderly.
- Build self-esteem and satisfaction for both age groups through the learning of new skills.
- Connect youth and seniors in ways that are mutually beneficial.
- Overcome stereotypes and encourage personal development by creating access to new social networks, learning, and civic engagement.



Christmas is a great time for a good conversation



A student, and friend, create a masterpiece



A senior, and friend, play Connect Four



“ Seeing the students coming for a visit is the bright spot in my week. - Senior Participant ”

# In Review Senior High Junior High

## A Year in Review 2009-2010

The 2009/2010 program year will be remembered as a time of tremendous growth and change for LINKages. We began the program year in a new office location and experienced the anticipated chaos that comes from an office move. It was also no surprise that there were double the number of requests for our programs and services in fall of 2009. In September, LINKages developed a wait-list for our program requests and was surprised to learn that we turned away potentially 800 youth and senior participants who asked for our knowledge and support to develop a year-long intergenerational friendship. As a result of the growing requests, LINKages' Board of Directors and Leadership Team developed new strategic plans that will help address the demand as we move forward. We are proud to report that in 2009/2010 LINKages was successful in increasing the number of youth and seniors brought together, while running a balanced budget in times of a recession.

By October 2009, all of our program recruitment, orientation and training was well underway when an unforeseen event occurred and affected all of our programs. For two months in November and December 2009, LINKages was forced to respond to the H1N1 influenza pandemic and the public health recommendations that restricted visitors in senior's centres. Out of this unexpected challenge came a true opportunity. The very creative LINKages program coordinators began a pen-pal program where students wrote to their senior friends and began developing a friendship through letter writing. This activity proved more successful than we

could have imagined. Feedback given by our seniors and senior organizations indicated the joy it brought to the older adults to receive an "old fashion" written letter, especially during the holiday season. As a result of the popularity of this program, LINKages will now incorporate this type of activity into future program years.

By January 2010, programs were finally up and running and all students and seniors welcomed the face-to-face interactions even more. New activities and themes were developed in the fall and these were key to enhancing the connections over the next six months. There were themes and activities around the 2010 Winter Olympics, "An Academy Award" event, "Name that Tune", and finally a "Mad Hatter Tea Party" for the "Year End Celebration".

Even though it may have been a challenging start to our program year, all LINKages programs finished with hundreds of new friendships and relationships built between the ages.



A senior, and hat, at a Mad Hatter Tea Party

## Junior and Senior High School Programs

Between September 2009 and June 2010, LINKages facilitated collaborations between nine public and separate schools with seniors' residences in Calgary. LINKages' reputation has grown over the last few years and we are known for the successful implementation of these school-based programs throughout the city. The numbers of student applications in most of our schools have far surpassed our ability to meet the demand. For example, this past September each program was oversubscribed and while we received over 75 student applicant forms from one school, we were only able to accommodate 30 young volunteers per program.

While it is disappointing to turn away any volunteers, LINKages has developed a solid business sense where we can only operate programs where funding is in place. In September 2009, we were forced to cancel two of our long-time school programs as a result of the economic downturn. The integrity of the remaining programs did not suffer and our financial sponsors have seen the value that our programs provide. In 2009/2010 we successfully ran programs for 350 students and 185 seniors. Year-end evaluations have been extremely positive and we are encouraged that others see the impact of LINKages' programs and services.

“

... I am very grateful for this opportunity ... to make a very special friend and to make peoples' days brighter with my presence (and rest assured my day got a whole lot brighter visiting them). I think that what LINKages is doing is amazing, the fact that it gives teens like me the chance to grow more empathetic to others as well as giving seniors loving attention and a chance to pass on their wisdom.

- Student Participant

## Calgary After-School Program

In January 2010, LINKages partnered with the City of Calgary and began running three “After School Programs” for “critical hours” when the youth are considered to be at greatest risk. The City of Calgary, Family and Community Support Services provided the funding for LINKages to hire a new program coordinator and develop and run programs between 3:00 – 6:00 pm throughout the city. From January – June 2010 we worked with these new partners:

- Confederation Park (Colonel Irvine Junior High students),
- Bow Cliff Seniors Centre (St. Michael’s Junior High School students),
- St. Francis High School (Confederation Park seniors).

Planning is currently underway to finalize the fourth after-school program for the fall of 2010 and grow this initiative over the next two years.

## Young Adults Connecting with Seniors (YACS)

An extension to our school programs saw the start of our “Young Adults Connecting with Seniors” program in 2006. Many requests were received from graduates who had been part of our High School program asking for volunteer experiences to help with admission into post-secondary schools. LINKages discovered that young adults need ways to connect and develop relationships with the older generation, a process which can build self-esteem, develop leadership skills, allow the exploration of career paths and acquire community service experience for scholarships and careers. LINKages has been supportive of these learning opportunities and over the last couple of

years has taken in practicum students to help with the support and implementation of our intergenerational programs.

During the 2009/2010 program year, our YACS program was successful in matching over 50 post-secondary students with 23 seniors in a variety of supported and independent living situations. From seniors’ activity centres, to lodges, to seniors’ communities we have brought activities of fun and engagement to the groups such as ice cream socials and the inauguration of the very successful cards nights, which have prompted senior participants to request for even more of these events.

## LINKages’ Volunteer Program

Volunteering is one of the most fundamental acts of citizenship and philanthropy in our society. LINKages was founded on the principal that positive outcomes are seen when we encourage young and old to share their time, energy, and skills, and be involved in their community.

The demand for LINKages programs and services continues to increase, and as a result, we have been forced to seek out new and creative solutions to meet the growing community need. From this came the hiring of our new Volunteer Coordinator in 2009. New volunteer policies and procedures are in place and we continue to develop new roles and opportunities that can support LINKages staff and programs. Our Volunteer Coordinator has reached out in many new areas to obtain volunteers. She has made connections with our Corporate Sponsors (ie: Telus Days of Caring, United Way Campaigns, and SAP and Suncor) while increasing the number of program support volunteers that assist in our Junior High Programs. LINKages is also utilizing more alumni students in leadership roles and continues to increase the number of volunteer hours that have contributed to our programs. In total for the 2009/2010 program year, LINKages program participants provided more than 6500 volunteer hours - despite the shortened program year!



The stakes aren't high at a cards night, but the chances of having a good time are



“ I’m completely overwhelmed by the length of our friendship and am very satisfied with the program. - Senior Participant ”

## Community Initiatives

LINKages recognizes the escalating community interest in connecting generations and the limitations that exist, as a result of a lack of funding, in our ability to accommodate all requests. There is a need for provincial and local leadership in the area of intergenerational practice, particularly in supporting organizations to overcome barriers and develop the skills, commitment, connections and resources to successfully offer their own intergenerational programs. With LINKages' recent success in working in rural Alberta communities we have learned how to teach others and have promoted the values of connecting generations throughout our local community and beyond. Over the last two years, LINKages has moved beyond being just a program provider and is now an expert in the field of

intergenerational practice that helps to build community capacity to support and develop programs, and bridge the gap between knowledge, information and implementation.

Most of our "Community Initiatives" have resulted in new partnerships and this was the case between Carewest and Mount Royal Disability Studies. With the support and facilitation of LINKages, young adults were provided with work experience and the hands-on practical knowledge in working with seniors with disabilities.

Another community pilot project brought together older adults in the community with students in High School and Junior High and had them teach the seniors valuable computer skills. Every Friday afternoon, Bowness High

School computer lab would be opened to 25 young people and 12 local seniors learning how to set up an email account, use Facebook, research on google, and, of course, they were building friendships all the while. Again, this program turned out so successful that in spring 2010, United Way recognized LINKages "Silver Surfers" as the successful recipient of the award "Together We Can". A second program was also launched with Montgomery Junior High and the seniors from a lodge only a few blocks away. The "Key Boarders" had 13 students and eight seniors in its first year. Both schools and seniors groups are requesting these programs continue in fall 2010 and we are working to secure the funds to make this happen.

## Intergenerational Program Training and Rural Community Workshops

LINKages first responded in 2003 to rural community requests for best practices in the implementation and management of intergenerational programs by offering an extensive rural training program, resource manual and ongoing support of participants. The 2009/2010 program year was no exception as we continued our outreach to rural communities. With the support of our funders we developed training workshops that were delivered in Grand Prairie, Peace River, Vulcan, Rocky Mountain House, Camrose, Ponoka and Bassano. Since the inception of our

rural training initiative we have created dozens of intergenerational programs throughout the province and they are now implementing their own intergenerational programs in their communities. Fall 2010 looks to be just as busy for this training as we currently have four more rural communities requesting our workshops, and we are presently trying to secure the dollars to build the capacity of rural communities throughout Alberta.



Trainees learn about the difficulties seniors face

“

... As students, we are always searching for volunteer opportunities, and volunteering with LINKages has been by far, one of the greatest that has been made available ... I am very glad that I participated in this volunteer program, it has been so rewarding. I think that as a group, we have made this experience an extraordinary one.

”

- Student Participant

## Conclusion of the Auditor's Report

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Society as at June 30, 2010 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

### Chartered Accountants

Calgary, Alberta  
September 2, 2010

## LINKAGES SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

### Statement of Financial Position

#### June 30, 2010

	<b>2010</b>			<b>2009</b>
	<b>General</b>	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>				
<b>CURRENT</b>				
Cash, general	\$ 50,326	\$ -	\$ 50,326	\$ 19,122
Cash, restricted casino funds	-	10,376	10,376	52,764
Marketable securities	46,687	-	46,687	46,486
Accounts receivable	1,353	954	2,307	2,286
Prepaid expenses	<u>7,041</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,041</u>	<u>9,033</u>
	105,407	11,330	116,737	129,691
Property and Equipment	<u>9,846</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,846</u>	<u>10,313</u>
	<u>\$ 115,253</u>	<u>\$ 11,330</u>	<u>\$ 126,583</u>	<u>\$ 140,004</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
<b>CURRENT</b>				
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,079
Deferred revenue	<u>29,530</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>29,530</u>	<u>41,985</u>
	<u>33,530</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>33,530</u>	<u>46,064</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>				
Invested in capital assets	9,846	-	9,846	10,313
Restricted	-	11,330	11,330	52,924
Unrestricted	<u>71,877</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>71,877</u>	<u>30,703</u>
	<u>81,723</u>	<u>11,330</u>	<u>93,053</u>	<u>93,940</u>
	<u>\$ 115,253</u>	<u>\$ 11,330</u>	<u>\$ 126,583</u>	<u>\$ 140,004</u>

# Thank You *Thank You* Thank You

We are *so* grateful to all our partners and supporters who believed in our efforts and who helped to make 2009/2010 such a successful year. We couldn't do this work without you.

## **Executive/Board Members 2009-2010**

### **Executive**

Bernadette Alexander, Board Chair  
Debbie Garbutt, Treasurer  
Bernadett Maxwell

### **Directors**

Ulrike Thomas  
Kathleen O'Halloran  
Marianne McKay  
Peggy Campbell  
Diane Caleffi  
Lisa Mazur

### **Executive Director**

Debra Armstrong



## **THANK YOU TO ALL OUR 2009-2010 Financial Supporters**

### **Corporations**

Telus Corporation  
Roseland Development Ltd.  
TransCanada Pipelines Ltd.  
Nexen Inc.  
Husky Energy  
Willco Transportation Ltd.

### **Days of Caring**

S.A.P.  
Suncor

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United Way of Calgary and Area  
United Way – Donor Choice  
The Mann Foundation  
Calgary Catholic Charities  
The Calgary Foundation – Betty Jane  
Kadz Memorial  
The Calgary Foundation –  
Cunningham Lee Sullivan Fund  
Encana Cares Foundation  
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### **Government**

Rural Alberta's Development Fund  
The City of Calgary – FCSS (Calgary  
After School)  
Alberta Health Services – Carewest

### **Individuals**

Bill Davis  
John Cardiff

### **Service Clubs**

Royal Canadian Legion #284  
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