

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Celebrating intergenerational connections for 25 years



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

LINKages

CONNECTING GENERATIONS

To honour all those who have come before and welcomed us onto this land we now call home, LINKages Society of Alberta acknowledges the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations). Moh'kins'tsis, named by the Blackfoot, meaning "Where the Bow River meets the Elbow" is also home to the Metis Nation of Alberta, Region III.

As we move forward into 2020 we feel the importance of honouring our program history of 25 years, our outgoing Board Chair, and looking forward to the future. LINKages Society of Alberta started in 1994 as the Friends of Seniors Society and one single Care Centre-School program. The program was the brainchild of Brenda Wood, who had the vision to recognize the importance of connecting youth and seniors for the benefit of both.

Since that time, we have grown into 15 school programs in 14 care centres, a thriving volunteer program, community programs in 4 different areas of the city, rural program development and training programs, research and evaluation, and have become leaders in programming which fosters the reciprocity and potential of seniors and youth to connect, care for, and learn from one another.



Sammy Ahn has served as a beacon of youth potential and what is possible for LINKages Society of Alberta for many years, having begun his involvement as a high school student in one of our visitation programs. Sammy moved on to post-secondary studies and became an integral part of creating our University of Calgary chapter, which continues to grow and thrive today. As a graduate of the U of C, Sammy joined our Board of Directors and became Board Chair in 2018, leading the organization through a time of transformation to the stability and foundational excellence which we enjoy today. Sammy has been accepted to a graduate studies program in France, and moved in January to begin an exciting next chapter in his life.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the staff team, volunteers, and all the seniors and youth served by our programs, thank you, Sammy, for all your leadership and hard work. We wish you the best in your studies. Thank you for being our champion of intergenerational connections!

As incoming chair, I am honored and excited to be part of an organization that truly values diversity guided by our vision and mission.

Our Vision - A strong and vibrant community where youth and seniors thrive.

Our Mission - To foster mutually meaningful intergenerational relationships between youth and seniors

I bring a strong business and organization development background which will support LINKages to grow into the next 25 years.

Together, our Board of Directors and Executive Director have alignment, clarity and focus on our governance role, our operational and strategic priorities. With passion, commitment, strong leadership; amazing staff and volunteers, LINKages is in excellent hands to move forward, sustaining and growing our funding base, program knowledge and training, and scope of our impact.

Thank you, Calgary, for the last 25 years of success - we have much to be grateful for and have much to look forward to!

Kathy Phillips
Board Chair

Ruby Lecot
Executive Director



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Chair

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Vice Chair

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Karen Wang
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Director

Ruby Lecot
Executive Director

25TH ANNIVERSARY & INTERGENERATIONAL DAY



June 1, 2019 was a very special day for LINKages Society of Alberta as we celebrated International Intergenerational Day and our 25th Anniversary of service in Calgary and area!

The event was opened by the honorable Josephin Pon, Minister of Seniors and Housing, who made time in her busy schedule to speak to the importance of intergenerational connections in strong communities.

Thanks to our wonderful and enthusiastic group of volunteers, we had a great day of intergenerational activities, fun, and celebration, with a knitting corner, art activities, bouncy castle, popcorn, cotton candy, and a wonderful meal of smoked roast beef and salads.

On behalf of the current Board and staff team at LINKages, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all who have come before us and delivered us to this important milestone.

OVER 5,000 LONG TERM INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTIONS HAVE BEEN MADE OVER 25 YEARS, TEACHING COMPASSION, LEADERSHIP AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS, RECIPROCITY, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF FRIENDSHIP.

This could not have been achieved without the tireless support of volunteers, participants, staff and leadership over the past 25 years.

Thank you, Calgary - We look forward to connecting generations and strengthening communities for the next 25 years and beyond!



MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Libby is a generous senior who has been devoting her time as a participant in one of our Care Centre-School Programs for many years. Every year she embraces her new students with an open mind and an open heart as if they were her own grandchildren.

During the one-hour program, she is intentional about understanding what it is that makes her students tick. She dedicated time last summer meeting with her students at a community centre in order to stay connected. Libby also loves sharing and spreading kindness - especially in the form of Kit Kat bars!



"My students have been most kind and caring. I have enjoyed every moment i spent with them. They have taught me a lot about teenagers today. I am so proud of them."

- Libby, pictured above with two students



VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

LINKages' success and sustainability comes largely from volunteers who enable us to deliver leading-edge programs. Over the last year, primary focus went towards the enhancement and development of the volunteer program, leading to an increase in our volunteer base. Various trainings and education enhancement opportunities, along with an intentional focus celebrating volunteers all contributed to enriching volunteer culture. Ongoing work towards developing a robust feedback and evaluation framework is in process to support the recognition and growth of volunteers.

In response to "What is your favourite part of volunteering with LINKages?" here's what our volunteers had to say:

- *"The ability to use my background skills to contribute."*
- *"The beautiful seniors and youth we work and connect with."*
- *"Meeting new people. I love hearing their stories."*



**220 AMAZING VOLUNTEERS,
1775+ VOLUNTEER HOURS IN 2019**

2019 VOLUNTEER AWARDS



WINNER OF THE GALVIN FAMILY FOUNDATION AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SENIOR VOLUNTEER **LORNA DIPROSE**

There are few people who give as much time to their community as Lorna Diprose does. At LINKages, we are very lucky Lorna enjoys intergenerational relationships as much as she does. She has participated in every program we run out of the Greater Forest Lawn 55+ Society, including two Calgary After School Programs, three Project Inspire Programs, and our new Performance of Your Life Program. Lorna is a great advocate for connecting generations and has been a reliable support for the coordination of our programs.



"I always enjoy meeting and learning about the other cultures. I am always amazed about the hidden talents we have. We learn to accept people of all ages and races which is what Canada is all about."

- Lorna

WINNER OF THE BETTY JANE KADZ MEMORIAL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING YOUTH VOLUNTEER **LAURA NGUYEN**

Laura has been an incredible asset to the LINKages program in Forest Lawn. She joined our IG After School program in January of 2019 and has since been part of all three of our Project Inspire programs, contributing more to the group each time she volunteers. Laura is currently volunteering with LINKages and Fuse33 to learn how to build projects she can teach back to the community as an intergenerational initiative.



Being a part of LINKages "gives me the opportunity to learn about other cultures and socialize at the same time. This program helped me improve my social skills and develop relationships."

- Laura

YOUTH VOLUNTEERS OF DISTINCTION - HONOURABLE MENTION:

EZRA VAN WENSEM
ANIKA ITO
JOELLE VAN WENSEM



CARE CENTRE • SCHOOL PROGRAMS

LINKages' provides intergenerational programs which involve more than 400 students from both junior and high schools and 200 residents from 14 care centres. The relationships which developed over 8 months of visits created social and emotional development and leadership skills. Through these visits, there was a mutual transfer of knowledge as students and seniors connected, social isolation was reduced, and self-esteem increased as participants reported a deeper sense of fulfillment in their lives.

420

Student Participants

200

Senior Participants

15

Volunteers

2133

Total senior Hours

103

Age of Oldest Participant

10

Age of Youngest Participant

15

Schools Participated

14

Care Centres Participated

6021

Total Student Volunteer Hours

"I really enjoy LINKages because I get a chance to meet new people. All of the visits and activities are excellent!"

- Terry (Pictured above)

"It allows us to make a strong connection with him. I think it's cool seeing how different, yet also similar, our lives have been. I enjoy LINKages so much because of the experiences I have, sharing stories between each other. These experiences can help us to compare and understand each other better in a positive and meaningful way."

- Student

CALGARY AFTER SCHOOL



LINKages piloted a new Calgary After School Intergenerational Program (IG After School) in the Greater Forest Lawn area. Two 12-week programs engaged local youth and seniors in intergenerational icebreakers, lessons, and activities based in social-emotional competencies to enhance personal growth, intergenerational awareness and empathy. The program recognizes the physical, social and emotional barriers both groups face and works to break down barriers using evidence-based programming in an environment of dignity, respect and social inclusivity (and fun!).

QUOTES:

- *"Without these programs I wouldn't have had the opportunity to communicate and integrate with others this far in age from me"*
- *"All ages in the community make a happy full circle."*

STATS FOR PILOT PROGRAM

- 19 senior participants
- 41 youth participants
- 100% of participants said they made a new friend in their community

In addition, IG After School provided the opportunity for vulnerable youth aged 12-18 to connect with seniors in a long-term care facility. Students received additional training regarding dementia and aging, personal and social responsibility, respect for diversity, fairness, inclusion, cooperation, and patience. Weekly activities and post-program discussions reinforce learning and incorporation of skills.

WHAT IS NEW THIS YEAR?

- Intentional focus in providing more locally-sourced nutritious snacks
- Including more dementia-friendly activities to engage people living with dementia at all stages of the disease.



COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



Thanks to funding from the United Way, we continue to deepen partnerships in Calgary communities. In 2019, we saw improvement in community impact. Over the last year, we approached Community Initiatives programs more intentionally through redesigning how these programs focus on relationship development between generations and have increased the opportunity for each generation to showcase their value to others.

Impact is measured by participants reporting they feel more connected to their community. Youth and seniors report satisfaction with "running into" people they now know from programs in public spaces. With the involvement and approval of families, youth and seniors will continue to visit each other after programs end.

Collaborative work continued and increased with our partners:

- Greater Forest Lawn 55+ Society
- Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens Association
- WP Puppets
- Calgary Boys & Girls Club
- Calgary Arts Academy
- City of Calgary Community Hubs
- Calgary Board of Education
- Calgary Catholic School District
- Fuse33.

STATS

- Youth Participation Hours: 792
- Senior Participation Hours: 774

(These hours do not include collaborative hours with new partners)



"Every generation has a different perspective on life. They see things differently than we do. Understanding each other is very important."

- Community Senior

INTERGENERATIONAL IMPACT



2019 provided LINKages with many exciting opportunities to learn, grow, and share our knowledge and reach.

- In May, LINKages was happy to host a researcher from the University of Heidelberg in Germany, who was travelling North America to gather information on best practices in intergenerational programming.
- In June, 4 LINKages staff attended the International Intergenerational Conference in Portland, Oregon. Intergenerational programming, shared sites, education, and research were highlighted, which included LINKages hosting a round-table discussion of intergenerational programming in school/care centre and community settings.
- In July, LINKages Society of Alberta was highlighted in an Alberta Mentoring Partnership webinar, which allowed us to share information and impact about IG programming as a vehicle for mentoring.
- Throughout the United Way Campaign, LINKages volunteered time as part of the United Way Speakers bureau, which allowed us to speak to many local businesses about the work and impact of the United Way and LINKages in Calgary.
- In November, LINKages presented at the Institute for Continuing Care Education and Research (ICCER) Conference (Calgary and Edmonton) which highlighted the positive impact and power of intergenerational programming in care centre settings.
- To wrap up the year, a very fun connection was created with the Silver Volunteer Corps of St. Petersburg, Russia (pictured above). We have begun connecting by Skype to share learning about how to engage both seniors and youth in volunteering across our different countries and cultures.





LOOKING AHEAD

2020 promises to be an exciting year ahead, with ongoing evaluation and evolution in our existing programs, and some expansion in scope and impact:

- Through partnership with Alberta Health Services, we will be piloting the Music2LINK program over the next 2 years. The program builds on the learning gleaned from our 2017 program trial, incorporating music-based intergenerational programming to engage secondary school aged youth, persons living with dementia, and their care partners in meaningful activities, experiences, and learning.
- With funding support from the New Horizons for Seniors Program, we will be developing an Intergenerational (IG) Outreach program mobilizing community minded post-secondary youth to visit, engage, and support some of our city's most vulnerable citizens - housebound seniors.
- Through funding from the Government of Alberta's Aging Well in Community grant program, we look forward to our second year of piloting our Rural LINK program, reaching out to more locations across Alberta to help them develop and benefit from intergenerational programming in their unique setting.
- We are excited to begin our second year partnering with the Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens Association to run intergenerational and intercultural art-based programs.
- To support ongoing quality improvement and impact of our programming, we are beginning work with post-secondary partners in Calgary to refine our evaluation tools and explore opportunities to contribute to the knowledge base supporting intergenerational programming benefits across the lifespan.



LINKAGES AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The LINKages Society of Alberta Board of Directors and Management would like to thank the generous support of our donors, volunteers, and dedicated staff for another successive year of delivering LINKages' programming. In 2019, LINKages maintained core programming, expanded into new reaches, and also pursued strategic opportunities to build robust governance commensurate to the size and impact of its operations. Leveraging past initiatives, LINKages has made steady progress in continuing to operate with fiscal responsibility that will drive future operational success and increased transparency. We are humbled to have built and maintained strong relationships with all our community stakeholders, and it is with great pleasure that the Board of Directors presents the audited financial statements for the year ended 2019. Looking to 2020 and beyond, we feel that the LINKages Society of Alberta has the foundational capacity, financial stability, and strong operational competencies to continue to generate distinguished intergenerational value to community stakeholders.

Karen Wang, Treasurer
LINKages Board of Directors

LINKages Society of Alberta Statement of Operations and Net Assets

Year ended December 31,	2019	2018
Revenues		
Foundations and agencies	\$ 179,370	\$ 110,179
Government agencies	164,010	195,836
Casino	61,850	66,645
Corporations	19,661	2,000
Individual	2,589	938
Interest	734	4,456
Fundraising (note 7)	311	-
Biography guides	155	1,328
Care centres	-	10,000
	<u>428,680</u>	<u>391,382</u>
Expenses		
Salaries and related benefits	285,520	232,709
Office and miscellaneous	42,643	17,855
Transportation	36,122	23,922
Rent and utilities	26,476	18,252
Program	15,236	23,524
Professional fees	13,826	15,250
Fundraising (note 7)	11,338	-
Advertising and promotion	10,563	-
Insurance	4,000	3,832
Amortization	2,396	1,835
	<u>448,120</u>	<u>337,179</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	(19,440)	54,203
Net assets, beginning of year	197,745	143,542
Net assets, end of year	<u>\$ 178,305</u>	<u>\$ 197,745</u>

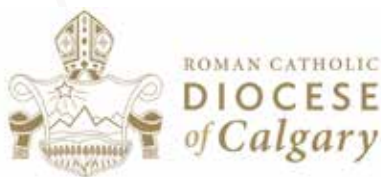


THANK YOU

Each year, LINKages benefits from the generosity of funding partners such as Alberta Health Services, family foundations, and individual donors with whom we collaboratively work with to achieve lasting impact. Their support allows us to invest resources in innovation, impact measurements, and reaching out to underserved areas. On behalf of the youth and seniors whose lives have been measurably impacted through your kindness and support, we THANK YOU!



BETTY JANE KADZ MEMORIAL FUND



GALVIN FAMILY FUND

