

ANNUAL REPORT 2020
THE POWER OF INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTIONS



LINKages
connecting generations

Message from the Board Chair and Executive Director

In the spirit of reconciliation and healing, we acknowledge the traditional territories of the Blackfoot people and all the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta which includes Siksika, Piikani, Kainai, Tsuut'ina, and Stoney Nakoda First Nations including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations. LINKages Society serves communities surrounding the land where the Bow River meets the Elbow River. The traditional Blackfoot name of this place is "Mohkinstsis" which we now call the City of Calgary. Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

Through the spirit of honoring foundations and welcoming the new, LINKages Society continues to evolve and respond to changes. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic. Over the following weeks and months the world has come to experience firsthand the truth LINKages is built upon - Social connection is critical.

Now more than ever it is recognized that intergenerational connections are not simply a "nice to have" option but are a "need to have" priority to maintain the physical, mental, and emotional health of all generations.

With the continued support of our valuable funders and donors, LINKages worked to ensure that our most isolated and vulnerable citizens remained connected. To reach quarantined and isolated seniors and youth at home, LINKages adapted and adopted the following program interventions:

- Activity Buddies - adaptation of care centre/school visitation programs where "Get to Know You" activity sheets are delivered back and forth between care centres and classrooms. This safely allows for paper quarantine time while maintaining connections between youth and seniors.
- IG Hangouts - Virtually-based intergenerational groups where participants completed games, activities, and taught each other unique new skills.
- Virtual Visits - Two schools and care centres stayed connected via Zoom on I pads, so that (masked) student pairs and their seniors could visit and complete pre-delivered activities.
- Physically distanced visits - The University of Calgary Chapter completed physical distance visits with their senior friends over the summer to remind them that they were valued and missed.
- IG Pen Pal Program - To reach seniors and youth without access to technology, LINKages implemented an Intergenerational Pen Pal Program, connecting pairs of seniors and youth by mail, which continues to grow in popularity.

In the coming year, LINKages will be exploring three exciting new projects - developing two social entrepreneurial streams, exploring a collaborative co-location model for non-profits, and exploring an intergenerational home-share program. As we look forward, we are deeply grateful for the investment of our funders, donors, volunteers, community partners and the amazing youth and seniors in our programs. Together we will thrive.

Kathy Phillips
Board Chair

Ruby Lecot
Executive Director



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CARE CENTRE/SCHOOL PROGRAMS



Prior to the start of the Covid pandemic in March 2020, students and seniors had visited for four months, building strong friendships. Thanks to the extraordinary work of Program Coordinators, students, teachers, care centre liaisons and parents, connections continued to ensure that seniors knew they were cared about, valued, and missed.

Students made cards, letters, and art to send to their senior friends. The families, teachers, and care centre liaisons at GP Vanier Jr High and George Boyack Care Centre arranged for a physically distanced visit over the summer to brighten the days of their senior friends. In the fall, critical social connections continued through a mixture of virtual zoom visits, two-way “activity buddy” programs hand delivered between schools and Care Centres, and card making campaigns by students.

421

Student Participants

300

Senior Participants

425

Connections

IMPACT

“Let me put it this way, there are days when Dorothy (senior resident) doesn’t get out of bed..... at all. Once she finds out the kids are calling, she doesn’t hesitate to get up and is excited to be a part of it. It is the one bright spot we can rely on.”

- Jason, Care Centre Liaison

RURAL LINK



With support from Alberta's Aging Well In Community grant, LINKages completed the second year of a pilot program to grow intergenerational capacity in rural areas of Alberta.

Despite the devastating impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, LINKages Rural LINK Coordinator and provincial community partners worked creatively and diligently to accomplish and goals of the program - supporting the education and start up of pilot LINKages Chapters across the province, and developing a provincial Community Of Practice to share knowledge, resources, and support moving forward.

In collaboration with Alberta Blue Cross, the United Way of Calgary and area, and the Ministry of Seniors and Housing, the Intergenerational linkages Community Of Practice went live on the CORE Alberta website on October 26, 2020. The Community of Practice now hosts regular webinars and learning regarding intergenerational support and programming.



photo taken pre-pandemic

Please visit the newly launched CORE (Collaborative Online Resources and Education) website at <https://corealberta.ca/>

4

Rural LINK chapters

37

Community of Practice members, and growing

3

Monthly COP webinars and counting



COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

photo taken pre-pandemic

With support from United Way and an anonymous donor, Community Programs pivoted during Covid by utilizing some “new school” and “old school” adaptations:

- Community seniors and youth connected virtually via Zoom for regular "IG Hangouts", where participants visited and taught each other unique Do-It-Yourself skills.
- The University of Calgary chapter taught East Village seniors how to use their smart phones and tech to stay connected during physically distanced learning sessions.
- LINKages started an old-fashioned intergenerational Pen Pal Program to connect community youth with seniors without access to technology.

JOIN US FOR AN ONLINE INTERGENERATIONAL HANGOUT!!



54

Pen Pal participants

14

IG Hangout participants

12

Project Inspire participants

18

Story of Your Life participants

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!



photo taken pre-pandemic

Each year LINKages is supported by dozens of volunteers like the University of Calgary LINKages Chapter and the Bow Valley Cares college students (pictured above completing art projects with our East Village Seniors - photo taken pre-pandemic). Volunteers are the life-blood of LINKages, generously sharing their skills of facilitation, administration, governance, finance, social media and marketing, and event set up and take-down.

Even during this pandemic year, volunteers contributed over **360 hours of service** in support of LINKages operations. Thank you all, as we simply could not do what we do without every single one of our amazing volunteers!

The Betty Jane Kadz Youth Memorial Award for Outstanding Youth Volunteer:

Lauren Jarek-Simard

Over the course of the spring and summer of 2020, Lauren personally hand crafted and decorated over 300 origami crane cards which she filled with inspirational notes. LINKages distributed the cards throughout our care centre partners so that over 300 seniors received a thoughtful note during the lock-down phase of the pandemic.

"I wanted to do something to support the people who I knew would be greatly affected by the pandemic. I wanted to show them they're not alone, and that they're greatly appreciated. I hope that those who received my cards felt loved and hopeful, and I'm so happy that I've been able to reach out and do something to help others."



It is due to Lauren's exceptional commitment to ensure that isolated seniors knew they were cared about during their most vulnerable time that she has been chosen as our 2020 Outstanding Youth Volunteer.

The Galvin Family Foundation Award for Outstanding Volunteers:

Tracey Vignault, Jason Kosolofski, Sophia Aristou

Despite the immense challenges brought by the Covid-19 lock-down and required isolation, Jason Kosolofski and Tracey Vignault (rec therapists at Carewest George Boyack) and Sophia Aristou (teacher liaison at Georges P. Vanier School) worked diligently and collaboratively together with LINKages to overcome roadblocks and make virtual visits happen between seniors and youth. Everyone observed such great benefit for participants that they moved the program up from bi-weekly to weekly. It is because of the incredible commitment and work of community partner champions like Sophia, Tracey, and Jason that we are able to make such a positive impact in the lives of isolated seniors and youth. It is for this reason that all three have been chosen as our 2020 Outstanding Volunteers.

Honorable Mention - Marie DeCoste

MUSIC2LINK



IG AFTER SCHOOL



photo taken pre-pandemic

MUSIC2LINK:

The pandemic necessitated a major direction change for the Music2LINK program, as the innovative music and art-based program was built on engaging seniors living with dementia in person-to-person activities with youth. Due to the nature of the disease, online programs were not optimal so efforts shifted to supporting caregivers during this challenging time. Virtual “Conversation Cafes” were hosted with care givers to provide resources, home activities, and support.

The initial sessions held in person prior to the onset of the Covid - 19 pandemic showed great promise, and we look forward to offering the program face to face when it is once again safe to do so.

We are grateful to work in partnership with Alberta Health Services to learn best and emerging practices in community dementia care.

IG AFTER SCHOOL

With the continued support of the City of Calgary FCSS, IG After School adapted and continued as an activity buddy program after the onset of the pandemic, with seniors and students learning social/emotional skills through fun activities assisted by care centre liaisons and teachers.

We are also thankful to our 8 community partners who work collaboratively with us to provide needed and impactful social/emotional skill building programs.

We look forward to the end of the pandemic, and continuing to evolve and improve our collective impact as part of the Calgary After School collaborative of youth serving programs across the city.

83

Students

43

Seniors

83

Connections

84

Students

42

Seniors

84

Connections

INTERGENERATIONAL DAY JUNE 1, 2020



photo taken pre-pandemic

LINKages partnered with 6 intergenerational agencies across Canada to produce a virtual national quilt celebrating the 10th Anniversary of Intergenerational Day in Canada on June 1, 2020. Agencies and community partners submitted photos celebrating intergenerational connections which were woven into a Prezi virtual presentation celebrating intergenerational successes from coast to coast.

The 2020/2021 virtual quilt project can be viewed at:

<https://prezi.com/view/lnaGxDMNDxu01eFdHTCV/>



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 an unprecedented year of resilience, rising admirably to challenges posed by COVID-19 in delivering LINKages' programming. In 2020, LINKages has responded proactively to the needs of participants by adopting health, safety and physical distancing protocols, and converting in-person programming online. This has ensured that LINKages continues to deliver value, adapted to the virtual environment, during a difficult time when a focus on mental health, among other benefits through intergenerational programming, forms an important pillar for isolated demographics. Our donors and funders have been very supportive every step of the way, and this reflects the strong relationships LINKages continues to nurture with community stakeholders in achieving its vision and goals. It is with pleasure that the Board of Directors presents the audited financial statements for the year ended 2020. Through the continued work of dedicated LINKages staff, the board, and the board committees, in line with the board and organization priorities, LINKages has continued to improve upon past successes in process and transparency. In 2021 and beyond, we feel that the LINKages Society of Alberta is well set up for success once again to achieve its vision of fostering strong communities by being resilient and evolving its operational strengths and financial foundation."

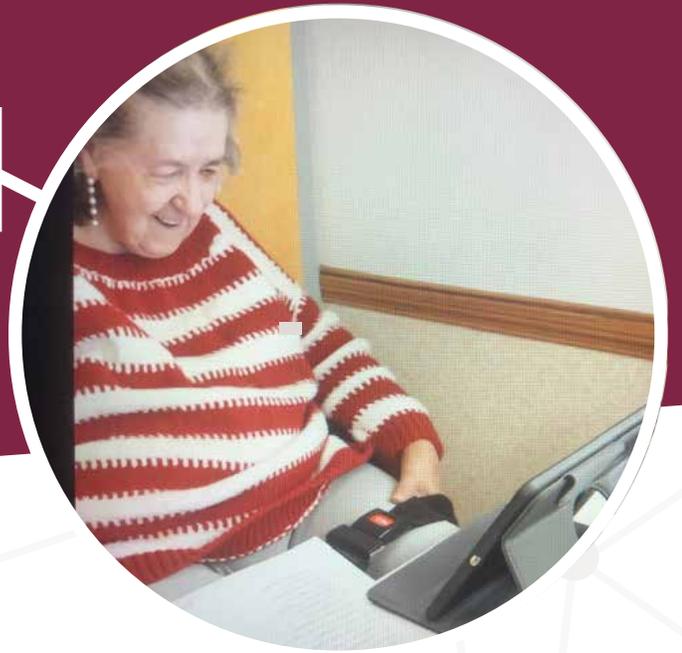
- Karen Wang, Treasurer

LINKages Society of Alberta

Statement of Operations and Net Assets

Year ended December 31,	2020	2019
		(Restated - note 12)
Revenues		
Government agencies	\$ 247,814	\$ 214,010
Foundations and agencies	102,188	129,370
Casino	31,913	49,274
Corporations	24,385	19,661
Individuals	6,653	2,587
Interest	1,010	734
Fundraising	-	311
Biography guides	-	155
	<u>413,963</u>	<u>416,102</u>
Expenses		
Salaries and related benefits	333,380	285,520
Office and miscellaneous	26,251	42,643
Rent and utilities	21,263	26,476
Professional fees	12,500	13,826
Transportation	11,381	36,122
Program	7,806	15,236
Insurance	4,254	4,000
Amortization	2,203	2,396
Advertising and promotion	717	10,563
Fundraising	-	11,338
	<u>419,755</u>	<u>448,120</u>
Deficiency of revenues over expenses	(5,792)	(32,018)
Net assets, beginning of year	165,727	197,745
Net assets, end of year	\$ 159,935	\$ 165,727

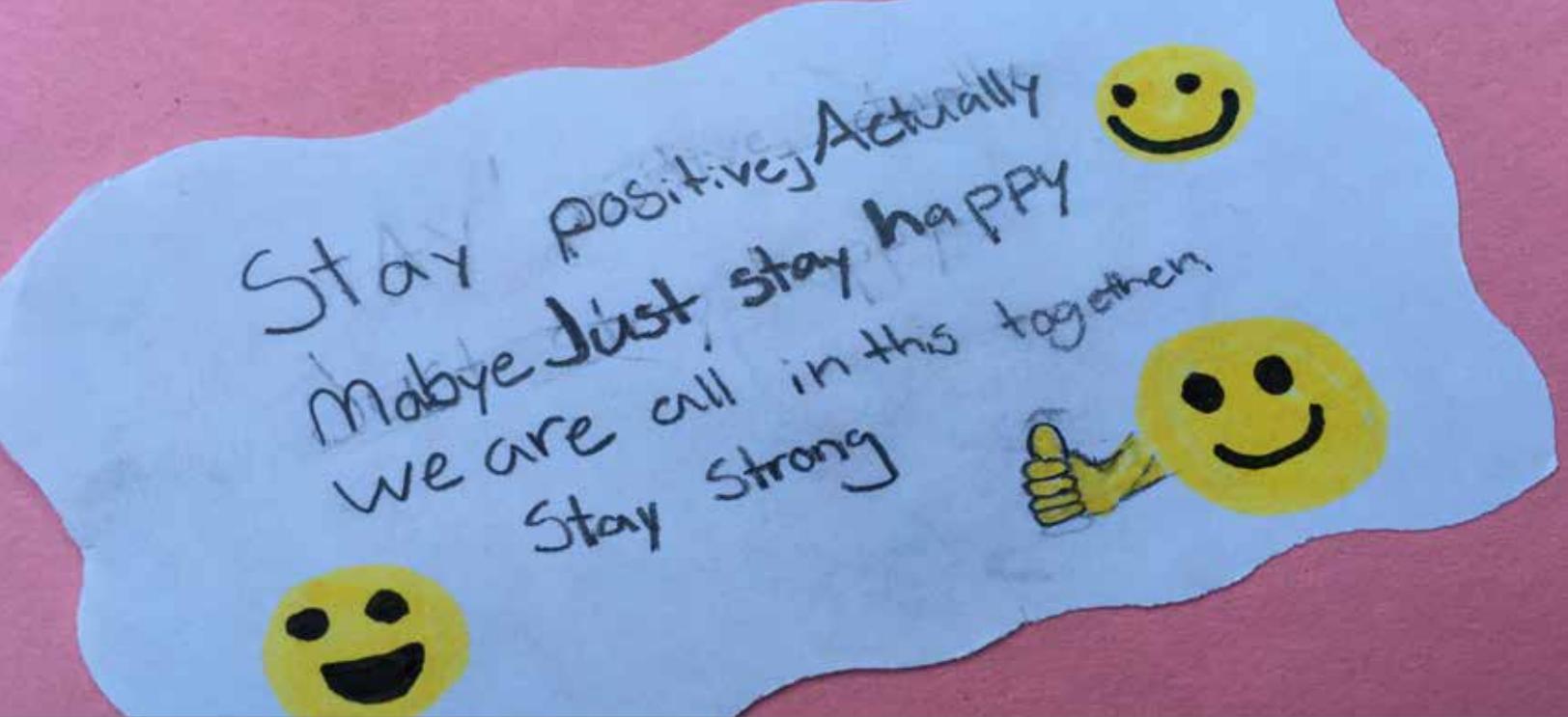
THE YEAR AHEAD



As we look towards the forever changed and post-pandemic future, LINKages Society will focus energy on the following exciting initiatives:

- Adapting our re-pilot intergenerational outreach program (IG Outreach) as a “phone pal” program to reach isolated seniors without access to technology who are living in the community with weekly phone calls and support.
- Working in partnership with the Calgary Seniors Resource Centre Society to develop a collaborative co-location model to improve efficiencies, effectiveness, and a seamless continuum of services available to seniors.
- Developing two new social entrepreneurial streams of income to support the sustainability and stability of the organization moving forward.
- Exploring the feasibility of an intergenerational HomeShare program, which would connect independently living seniors with an extra bedroom with students needing housing.
- Expanding collaboration with intergenerational organizations across the country (both registered charities and volunteer) to improve resources, knowledge, and support available to national and local efforts.
- Continuing to connect virtually with the National Centre for Social Help in St. Petersburg, Russia to build international collaboration and shared learning regarding the engagement and support of senior volunteers and mentors.





THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

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!










MONTHLY DONORS







ANONYMOUS DONOR