

LEGACY IN

W I N T E R
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ACTION

15 YEARS OF LOVE

Celebrating
Black artists

Reality Check

IS THIS FOR REAL?
DIGS INTO
TOUGH TOPICS

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Cover photo by Stefan Legacy



Martin Garber-Conrad

Martin Garber-Conrad

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Equity and inclusion are fundamental pillars of a safe and strong community.

While current and systemic violence against Black communities in the United States make the news, we are reminded that Black and Indigenous communities in Canada face similar oppression.

As community builders, Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) has a responsibility to participate in dismantling systems of injustice and violence. So, we stand in solidarity with our Black and Indigenous neighbours and encourage others to listen to their stories.

This issue of *Legacy in Action* features some of the incredible work that Black-led and BIPOC-serving organizations are doing in Edmonton.

Some of these organizations have received funding through ECF's Anti-Racism Fund. This fund was created to re-affirm our commitment to supporting BIPOC communities in our city. Since June 12th, we have provided more than \$365,000 to 12 projects through the Fund.

On page 18, we look at a series of digital round tables presented by the Centre for Race and Culture. These sessions focus on educating people about the issues surrounding racism in our community, including how media can do a better job covering issues of race.

Meet the team behind the *Is This For Real?* Podcast on page 15. ECF funded the hiring of a staff editor, who will help this independent journalism initiative expand beyond the podcasting format.

The need for representation is a

recurring theme in this issue. On page 7, there's a story about Say It Loud. This initiative provides Black youth with the opportunity to pitch and showcase projects in a variety of sectors.

Youth are the key to building a better future. The Edmonton Refugee and Emerging Community Scholarship Fund is highlighted on page 12. This fund was set up by a group of passionate donors including Vanessa Desa. Thanks to their vision, the fund provided 16 scholarships, ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000, to newcomer students in Edmonton this past summer.

Most of us still have work to do when it comes to addressing prejudice. These journeys often start by looking inward. On page 22, we visit the Edmonton Shift Lab to learn about The White Fragility Subscription Box. Each box provides a carefully curated learning experience designed to inspire critical thought and reflection in subscribers.

It's not hard to become angry, sad and overwhelmed by the impacts of racism on our communities. It can help to remember that *we are* a community; we are *not* alone. This is why ECF is pleased to enter our fourth year as a sponsor of 5 Artists 1 Love—Edmonton's largest and longest-running Black History Month event. Combining visual art shows and a live concert component, this event has become a highlight of our city's art sector. On page 9, there's more about the origins of the event and what's being planned for COVID-safe festivities this February.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Legacy in Action*.



ABI AJIBOLA

Abi recently relocated to St. Albert with her husband and 3 little boys. She has been a portrait photographer for over 10 years, specializing in children and families. Abi enjoys the opportunity photography affords her to meet new people from different spheres of life.



ESTA BEE PHOTOGRAPHY

Esta Baker of Esta Bee Photography is an emerging Indigenous artist and photographer from Yellowknife, NWT and now calls the Edmonton area home. She is a candid photographer focused on the connection we have to this land, representing Indigenous culture and diversity.

LISA CATTERALL

Lisa is an Edmonton-based freelance writer and editor. Over the past decade, her writing has appeared in magazines like *Edify* Edmonton, *WHERE* and *The Tomato*. When she's not feverishly clacking away at a keyboard, she can be found enjoying many of our city's culinary gems.



KEON COURTNEY

Born and raised in Edmonton, Keon is a self-taught portrait artist who enjoys working in both digital and traditional mediums. He finds inspiration in the diversity and uniqueness of people's faces, and focuses on the imperfect details to capture his subject's true being.



JAY DONTAE

Jay is a Canadian fine artist whose art poetically blurs the lines between dreams and reality, hope and despair, nostalgia and futurism. His distinct style can be noted by his focus on deconstruction, exaggerated distortion of the human form and vibrant colour palette. His preferred mediums are painting, digital artwork and creative direction.



CONTRIBUTORS



STEFAN LEGACY

Stefan is a photographer based in Edmonton. Hailing from the Caribbean island of Trinidad and relocating to Canada in 2010, he found photography as art where he can express himself through images that tell stories.



CORY SCHACHTEL

Cory likes writing a whole heck of a lot, and thinks bows should replace handshakes from now on. One time, he saved a bunny from a crow.



AVRY LEWIS-MCDOUGALL

Avry has been in the Edmonton media world for over 10 years as a writer, reporter and podcaster. He's a graduate of NAIT's RTA Radio and TV program in 2013 and believer that green onion cakes are Edmonton's signature dish.



MERLIN UWALAKA

Merlin is a multidisciplinary artist and economist. As a writer, her work is part of an increasing body of economic and political commentary, criticism and cultural discourse focused on the African Diasporic experience.



BREANNA MROCZEK

Breanna is a writer and editor living in Edmonton. She was named Alberta Magazine Publishers Association's Volunteer of the Year in 2019 for her work with emerging writers.

SAYING
IT

LOUD

BY MERLIN UWALAKA

ILLUSTRATION BY
KEON COURTNEY



**LEADING THE WAY FOR
YOUNG BLACK FOUNDERS
AND TRAILBLAZERS**

Black people as frontier beings

Say It Loud is a national initiative that supports brilliance among young Black people, and is a direct response to racism that excludes Black folks from visible participation in the advancement of civilization and technologies stemming from anti-Black racism.

For Black youth, aligning with Indigenous African heritage means adapting and responding to the time while being rooted in respect for community, ancestry and land. It means actively participating in the creation and maintaining of a better world.

Farley Flex, co-founder of Say It Loud Canada, refers to this as Black brilliance. Thanks to minds like Valerie L. Thomas,

who invented the illusion transmitter,

Shirley Ann Jackson, the first African-American woman to earn a doctorate degree from MIT, Mary Beatrice Davidson Kenner, who patented an adjustable sanitary belt with an inbuilt, moisture-proof napkin pocket, Garrett Morgan, who filed a patent for a traffic control device having a third “warning” position and musician Sister Rosetta Tharpe, we live in a world with high-speed internet, rock ‘n’ roll, 3D-movies, traffic lights and menstrual pads. These are only a handful of Black innovators and creators, and it is hard to imagine the world without the gifts of their brilliance. >

Say It Loud

“I am proud to say that Say It Loud is debunking negative stereotypes of Black youth by showcasing other Black youth as entrepreneurs, artists, designers, and so on,” says Roderick Brereton, co-founder of Say It Loud Canada. “Say It Loud markets the participant to show other Black youths that they can do what they are passionate about. It doesn’t matter if they are continental African or first generation; they are able to express Black pride and cultural identity seeing others like themselves who have achieved or are achieving.”

Say It Loud provides this support by promoting Black pride and positive cultural identity through STEM, entrepreneurship, social innovation, literary, culinary, visual performance and fashion arts. This year, Say It Loud will be presenting opportunities in several Canadian cities, including Edmonton, leading up to the first biennial Say It Loud National Youth Summit in Ottawa during Black History Month in February 2021.

“Say It Loud does a great job of encouraging creativity and innovation by showcasing representation through its ambassadorship program,” says Nneka Otogbolu, Edmonton’s Say It Loud ambassador.

“It’s important for our Black youth to see themselves represented in fields they are interested in. My hope is that they feel inspired to become innovators as they grow into future leaders in these fields.”

“I AM PROUD TO SAY THAT SAY IT LOUD IS DEBUNKING NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES OF BLACK YOUTH BY SHOWCASING OTHER BLACK YOUTH AS ENTREPRENEURS, ARTISTS, DESIGNERS, AND SO ON.”

– Roderick Brereton

“IT’S IMPORTANT FOR OUR BLACK YOUTH TO SEE THEMSELVES REPRESENTED IN FIELDS THEY ARE INTERESTED IN. MY HOPE IS THAT THEY FEEL INSPIRED TO BECOME INNOVATORS AS THEY GROW INTO FUTURE LEADERS IN THESE FIELDS.” – Nneka Otogbolu

A local initiative

Supporting Black innovators is a localized effort with Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) providing funding to the Edmonton chapter of Say It Loud.

“At ECF, we recognize that our community is a region with tremendous assets and that many of these assets are not fully realized because of inequality. Based on this, we strive to ensure we are supporting and creating inclusive and equitable communities, and we hope to achieve this by helping to provide opportunities to equity-seeking community groups such as Say It Loud to amplify community voice and power,” explains Otogbolu, who also serves as ECF’s director of communications and equity strategy.

The Say It Loud initiative supports financial literacy, sponsorship and mentorship programs. For example, Flip Floss & Fly is an online and in-class financial literacy/personal development program intended to provide tools for Black youth.

There are other intangible initiatives, like debunking the negative and limiting stereotypes attributed to being Black. Say It Loud also actively promotes its participants to show youth that their Blackness can be multifaceted.

The ability to create and learn from a place of safety is a catalyzing and freeing experience, one that isn’t usually accessible to Black youth living a post-colonial, capitalist experience. However, with the support of organizations like Say It Loud and ECF, opportunities for innovation and growth are being created in the Edmonton community. ■



DARREN JORDAN
OF 5 ARTISTS 1 LOVE

ONE LOVE, 15 YEARS LATER

FACING A MILESTONE ANNIVERSARY, 5 ARTISTS 1 LOVE FINDS A NEW WAY TO CELEBRATE

BY LISA CATTERALL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
STEFAN LEGACY

AS BOTH AN ARTIST AND A PATRON, Darren Jordan has spent much of the last 15 years making a masterpiece in Edmonton's arts community. In the early 2000s, when he was an avid painter, Jordan noticed a distinct lack of diversity and representation, particularly for Black artists, in local art shows and galleries. So when an opportunity arose to show his work at an intimate gallery on 124 Street, Jordan had an idea.

"I thought, 'Why don't we extend this opportunity to other Black people in the community who are producing work?'" he says. "My mantra at the time was, 'If you can't find a scene or there is no scene ... make a scene.'"

And so, he did. In February 2006, Jordan curated the first-ever 5 Artists 1 Love

visual arts showcase, designed to celebrate Black artists in Edmonton. The show, hosted at the now-defunct Tu Gallery on 124 Street, was a resounding success. It offered participating artists a chance to gain exposure and sell their work, while also connecting with other Black artists in the community.

For the next few years, 5 Artists 1 Love followed its formula for success, filling the gallery each February for Black History Month. Each year, Jordan worked to make the showcase accessible to both art aficionados and those new to the gallery scene. He developed partnerships with local suppliers and caterers to create a polished experience, and personally footed the bill for any additional costs. The expenses were >



“MY MANTRA AT THE TIME WAS, ‘IF YOU CAN’T FIND A SCENE OR THERE IS NO SCENE ... MAKE A SCENE.’”



manageable at first, but when Gilles Hébert, then-executive director of the Art Gallery of Alberta, invited Jordan to bring the show to the AGA’s community gallery, things changed.

“For the first five years, I could pay out-of-pocket to get the event going. I didn’t have kids; it was my passion and I had the opportunity to receive a lot of goodwill from the community,” he says. “When we went to the AGA, everything was different. We needed means to pay for the event and for the rental.”

To cover costs of the growing event, Jordan penned a musical production, working with local Black performers to bring it to life. Just as with the visual arts showcase, the concept was a hit — it promptly sold out, with proceeds from ticket sales going directly to cover the costs of the art show.

During this time, Jordan also began partnering with Autism Edmonton as a way for 5 Artists 1 Love to give back to the community.

In the years that followed, 5 Artists 1 Love became a fixture in Edmonton’s arts and cultural calendar. Each February, the musical production and arts showcase offer audiences the chance to celebrate the rich cultural diversity found in the city’s Black community.

In 2018, Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) became a sponsor to support Jordan’s vision and the numerous artists involved in the visual arts and musical programming.

“ECF has a long history of supporting under-represented artists in Edmonton,” Andrew Paul, communications associate at ECF says. “5 Artists 1 Love was a perfect fit for ECF to continue this work and we’ve enjoyed watching Darren and his team grow the event over the years.”

Yet, despite the event’s remarkable success, Jordan set his sights higher.



“I wanted to do something outside of Black History Month,” he says. “We’re Black every day, not just in the coldest, shortest month of the year.”

When the AGA approached him with the prospect of bringing 5 Artists 1 Love into the main gallery in March 2021, Jordan was thrilled. With this new offer, he would be able to curate a show as usual in the community gallery space for Black History Month, and in the following month, present a retrospective on the event’s evolution over the past 15 years. He planned to make it a celebration to remember.

Unfortunately, as the extent of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic became clearer, Jordan realized the anniversary event he’d hoped to host was simply not possible.

“I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING OUTSIDE OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH. WE’RE BLACK EVERY DAY, NOT JUST IN THE COLDEST, SHORTEST MONTH OF THE YEAR.”

“It’s bittersweet — 2021 was poised to be really remarkable for us. Sweet because these are dreams that have reached fruition with the gallery ... but also bitter because it would have been a huge party, and we just can’t do that now,” he says.

Although the visual arts showcase will go ahead with reduced capacity at the AGA, Jordan has had to pivot with the musical showcase, developing an online event in accordance with ever-evolving public health guidelines. It may not be the event he’d hoped for, but it will undoubtedly still be one to remember.

“Half of what makes 5 Artists 1 Love what it is, is the audience and the energy in the room at our events. COVID-19 took the knees out from us this year,” he says. “But I’m doing my best to make sure it’s still unique and memorable.” ■

BY LISA CATTERALL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ABI AJIBOLA

FUNDING THE FUTURE FOR REFUGEE AND NEWCOMER YOUTH

Edmonton Refugee and Emerging Community scholarship fund helps students pursue post-secondary opportunities

It was a chance meeting more than a decade ago, but for Vanessa Desa the memory is as vivid as if it were yesterday. While attending a conference hosted by the Canadian Council for Refugees, she struck up a conversation with a young man on the lunch break. As it turned out, he had spent 12 years of his childhood in a Kenyan refugee camp. Now as a high school student in Canada, he was looking forward to a bright future and considering a career in medicine. That brief exchange left a lasting impression on Desa.

“He saw things that no child should ever have to see [in the refugee camp],” she says with tears in her eyes. “What came to mind for me was the resilience of this young man — to come to Canada to start high school and still have such powerful hopes and dreams. We need to support that resilience. We need to find ways to show young people who come from similar backgrounds that we as Canadians care about you. We believe in your resilience and we want to support you along your journey.”

Desa was no stranger to the stories of tenacity demonstrated by newcomers to Canada. She was working with the Strategic Alliance for the Advancement of Immigrant and Refugee Children and Youth (SAAIRCY), an Edmonton-based collaborative that brought together school boards, government representatives, cultural communities and community-based agencies to identify ways to support newcomer youth to be successful. Although the collaborative is no longer active, in the late 2000s, its mandate was to better understand the unique challenges faced by immigrant and refugee children and youth. Its goal was to support them to achieve success in school, transitioning to post-secondary education or employment and physical and mental well-being.

“As I was working on this initiative, I heard the stories of so many young people,” she says. “For many refugee students I spoke to, they weren’t excelling academically and didn’t have time to volunteer, which is often criteria used for selection on most scholarship funds, because they’re just surviving and supporting their families to survive.”

Previous to working with SAAIRCY, Desa was active on several grant committees with Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF). Through her involvement with ECF, she learned of the Belcourt Brosseau Métis Award Fund, which supports Métis Albertans through funding for post-secondary education and skills development. Seeing the success of the awards, and the impact they had on students, Desa was inspired. >

“What came to mind for me was the resilience of this young man – to come to Canada to start high school and still have such powerful hopes and dreams. We need to support that resilience.”

– Vanessa Desa





“For many refugee students I spoke to, they weren't excelling academically and didn't have time to volunteer, which is often criteria used for selection on most scholarship funds, because they're just surviving and supporting their families to survive.” – *Vanessa Desa*

If a similar program existed for immigrant and refugee children, she felt the results would be remarkable.

When it came time to discuss research findings and next steps with SAAIRCY stakeholders, Desa saw an opportunity.

As part of her presentation, she invited Craig Stumpf-Allen, director of grants and community engagement with ECF, to speak about the Belcourt Brosseau Métis Awards.

“And we just said, ‘You know, wouldn't this be an amazing building block?’ And so we asked if anyone was interested in creating this fund. Right away, hands shot up around the room,” she says. “A bunch of us invested a little bit of money and it just went forward from there.”

Twelve years after it was founded, the Edmonton Refugee & Emerging Community scholarship fund continues to change the lives of students who are

newcomers to Canada. The fund is managed and delivered in partnership with ECF and the Africa Centre and, in 2020, it provided 16 scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 to students in Edmonton.

Although she has not been involved in the administration of the fund for many years, Desa is thrilled to see it still going strong. Last year she was honoured when a young woman in her community, who had no knowledge of Desa's involvement in the fund's foundation, asked her to be a reference.

“I wasn't part of the decision-making process or anything, but I got a chance to be a reference for her for this scholarship. That was just wonderful. And even better yet — she got it and she's doing really well,” she says, beaming. “I hope it continues to grow and thrive and provide opportunities for many more students to succeed.” ■

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RAISING AWARENESS ON THE AIRWAVES



**IS THIS FOR REAL?
GIVES A VOICE TO
BLACK EDMONTONIANS >**

BY AVRY LEWIS-MCDOUGALL

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
ESTA BEE PHOTOGRAPHY

OUMAR SALIFOU AT
THE WALTERDALE BRIDGE

The Edmonton podcasting community is incredibly rich, with shows covering topics ranging from sports to music, but not as many are as raw and as vocal on important issues, matters relating to the Black communities of the city.

Is This For Real? is a podcast that looks at living in Edmonton as members of Black communities and the topics that affect them.

In its first season, the show tackles the topics of policing and anti-Black racism. Co-hosts Oumar Salifou and Hannan Mohamud, as well as contributors Bashir Mohamed, Avnish Nanda and producer Nicholas Yee, present each episode in a one-hour, open-conversation format.

The show debuted this summer after a number of recent deaths of Black people in the United States and Canada, and the protests following them on both sides of the border. It was paramount to launch a platform to give these stories a wider audience.

“I would say that Bashir and Avnish really had the vision to understand that people need to hear these stories and that now is that time. I think after seeing George Floyd happen, after seeing Breonna Taylor, after seeing things in Toronto, obviously having a long history of racism and anti-Black policing in Canada and America, it was about time something like this happened,” says Salifou.

The episodes go in-depth into matters such

“SOCIETY IS GOING TO VIEW BLACK PEOPLE NEGATIVELY IF YOU’RE CONSTANTLY PERPETUATING NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES IN THE MEDIA. THAT’S THE CONSEQUENCE OF PUBLISHING UNTHOUGHTFUL NEWS STORIES.”



as Jean-Claude Rukundo allegedly being pinned down by officers on the scene after his wife, Sifa Ngeze, was involved in a traffic accident in 2018, to the controversy surrounding Edmonton’s school resource officer program. Rukundo is currently suing officers Pierre Lemire and Owen Staudinger, as well as Edmonton Police Service Chief Dale McFee, for \$650,000.

Policing was one of the themes of the season. It’s tough to picture defunding or abolishing the police right now, with it being the highest budgeted item for the City of Edmonton. But, to Salifou, if that changed, the idea could be in play in the future.

“I think it’s possible; I think that’s what advocates of police abolitionists speak of. I think they speak of the possibility of living in a world without the police. I think if defunding the police is on the table, it’s a step in the right direction that prevents abuse of power or any kind of negative consequences from policing.”

One of the episodes also looks at how Salifou and Mohamed grew

up in the city's northside, attended Dickinsfield School and saw how it developed their relationship with law enforcement. The segments addressing these topics can be quite raw and it's been a line that the team at *Is This For Real?* has tried to balance when getting into these stories.

"There's a lot of pain in the Black community, because people here have [experienced racism] for quite some time. I think what's coming across is the pain and the sadness," says Salifou.

Another one of the topics addressed hit close to home for Salifou: Canadian media's relationship with the police and the status of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) journalists at major networks.

As a journalist whose work has appeared on CBC and CJSR FM, Salifou has looked at the use of language by reporters and outlets that can portray to a listener, reader or viewer a reason to look down on a Black person in a story.

"IF SOMEONE CALLS YOU RACIST, THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT'S A DEATH SENTENCE. THAT MEANS YOU SHOULD RECONSIDER YOUR ACTIONS AND TRY TO BE MORE INCLUSIVE. I THINK THAT SHOULD BE THE REACTION."

"Society is going to view Black people negatively if you're constantly perpetuating negative stereotypes in the media. That's the consequence of publishing unthoughtful news stories."

To Salifou, white reporters who are called out should reflect, so they can change the perspectives of their stories.

"If someone calls you racist, that doesn't mean that's a death sentence. That means you should reconsider your actions and try to be more inclusive. I think that should be the reaction. People get scared when you accuse them of racism, but I think ultimately what's necessary and what's needed is to change how Black people are covered in the media."

For the future of the show, the *Is This For Real?* team will chat with members of Black communities to see what they'd like to see addressed. Some of the ideas for future seasons include covering health care, the financial industry and education.

Edmonton Community Foundation is providing funding for *Is This For Real?* to hire an editor and expand the show from its current podcast format, and also to give Black journalists a space to be able to tell stories that impact their communities.

"It's always good to give back, I think that's the biggest thing," Salifou says, "I didn't necessarily have a lot of people that I looked up to when I was doing journalism; being able to be that person for someone else is really meaningful." ■



BY BREANNA MROCZEK
ILLUSTRATION BY JAY DONTAE

SPARKING ONLINE DEBATE, WITH AN IMPORTANT PURPOSE



THERE ARE MANY ORGANIZATIONS and individuals in Edmonton who, through their work and advocacy, have been talking about the need for more equity, diversity and inclusivity for years. But the killing of George Floyd and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement this spring put a spotlight on these conversations and the ongoing need for action and systemic change. In light of what was happening, the Centre for Race and Culture (CFRAC) wanted to contribute to conversations about anti-racism, systemic racism and discrimination here in Edmonton, and organized an online panel centred on anti-Black racism in Canada.

Organizers Myriam Gerber, Rose-Eva Forgues-Jenkins and Mansoureh Modarres knew they had to do more than just offer a single webinar. Forgues-Jenkins, CFRAC's Public Educator at the time, says that the panelists addressing anti-Black discrimination expressed the desire for their voices to not just be part of a one-off conversation about racism; they were keen to see anti-racism

"We are trying to bridge a gap for people who hear things in the media. We want to educate people and also help them understand how they can effect change in their own way, and collectively."

— MANSOUREH MODARRES



conversations continue. “At CFRAC, we really wanted to extend the momentum behind the protests of the summer and not have it be a phase that people forgot about,” says Forgues-Jenkins.

Thanks to funding from Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF), CFRAC was able to launch an ongoing series of free, online, moderated round tables. The initiative, called *Challenging Discrimination Through Community Conversations*, launched in June and provides a platform for people to address experiences of discrimination and exclusion, and opportunities for the Edmonton community to learn and develop strategies for intervention and “ally-ship.” Each conversation is centred on a theme to emphasize the lived experiences and realities of marginalized communities, and CFRAC invites the public to suggest topics they would like to see covered.

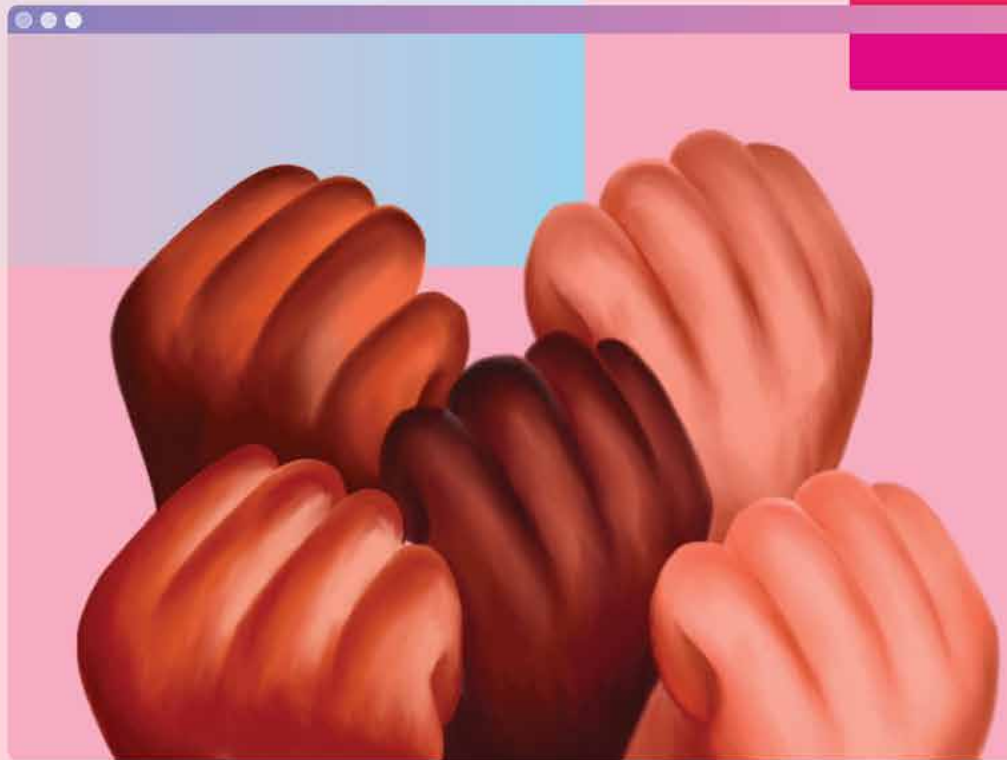
“The panels are supposed to be a community conversation and we want the topics to be generated for and by the community,” Forgues-Jenkins says.

“Initially, topics were based on the urgency of the Black Lives Matter movement,” explains Modarres, CFRAC’s education and research programs consultant. “As the series continued, we tried to pinpoint issues of racism happening in our communities in Alberta. We are trying to bridge a gap for people who hear things in the media. We want to educate people and also help them understand how they can effect change in their own way, and collectively.”

By offering an educational tool with voices from marginalized communities, former ECF board member Gurvinder Bhatia thinks the initiative is helping fill a gap left by mainstream media.

“If mainstream media is covering issues of race and other societal issues with a single lens, that impacts the general population’s perceptions about these stories,” Bhatia says.

Bhatia developed and moderated the third webinar in the series, *The Media and Racism*, to provide anti-racism education to members and consumers of the media. Bhatia is both a member of the media and a frequent media guest, and personally experienced an incident of racism from a fellow guest while on a mainstream media show last year. “The host handled the situation very poorly and, when the incident was brought to the attention of management, they refused to consider my suggestion that staff be provided with anti-racism training or even acknowledge that the incident had occurred,” Bhatia says. “In the case of the host, even when people are well-intentioned, unless they are equipped with learned knowledge, training and education with how to confront racism, the result is basically the same as doing nothing.”



“Even when people are well-intentioned, unless they are equipped with learned knowledge, training and education with how to confront racism, the result is basically the same as doing nothing.”

– GURVINDER BHATIA

Bhatia encourages media organizations to use the webinars as starting points for learning and reflection, but then to take action. “Making change involves having representation of the populace at all levels of an organization,” he says. “It is important that stories are told through more than one lens, and in order to do that, you need a diverse team telling stories and making decisions.”

Forgues-Jenkins agrees that the webinars should be the first, but not only, step that the community takes towards listening, learning and ultimately acting. “I encourage people to look into the work of the people who have appeared on the webinar,” she says. “These people have been doing a lot of work in the community to promote anti-racism. A lot of folks are looking to CFRAC’s other work, which is great. I also encourage people to look at the work of Africa Centre. If people are watching the webinars, I hope they see it as a jumping-off point and not a finite end to their knowledge, and are learning more about what’s happening in the community.”

“It is very important for us to continue the conversation and learn from each other throughout this process,” Modarres says. “I hope we can continue this interest in anti-racism activity, reach more people, and continue to see even more participants in our webinars. So far, the reception has been very positive.” ■

MILLENNIAL TRENDS

Edmonton Vital Signs is an annual checkup conducted by Edmonton Community Foundation, in partnership with Edmonton Social Planning Council, to measure how the community is doing. Vital Topics are a quick but comprehensive look at issues that are timely and important to Edmonton.

Unless otherwise stated, "Edmonton" refers to Census Metropolitan Area and not solely the City of Edmonton.

Who are the MILLENNIALS?

Alpha Generation

The youngest generation, born 2011 to present.

iGEN (Gen Z)

Post millennials, born between 1997 & 2010.

Millennial (Gen Y)

Born between 1981 & 1996.

GENERATION X (Gen X)

Born between 1965 & 1980.

BABY BOOMER (Boomers)

Born between 1946 & 1964.

The SILENT Generation

Born in 1945 or earlier.

Millennials make up ¼ of the population and are changing the way the world works.

Characteristics

DIGITAL NATIVES – smartphones and computers are second nature.

EGALITARIAN ATTITUDES (raised in a very ethno-diverse time, after the legalization of same-sex marriage.)

ECONOMICALLY CHALLENGED (high rates of debt – tuition, housing costs, childcare – and unstable economy.)

TIME IS A COMMODITY – they want convenience and will spend money to save time.

SHARING is important on social media or sharing experiences with other millennials.

Behaviours

- Willing to skimp on some things in order to splurge on a unique experience.
- Digital natives prefer to order by app or online.
- Want customization (one size does not fit all.)
- Seek unique experiences.
- Lean towards ethical (green) choices.

Travel

Millennials value travel as an essential part of their lives but cannot afford large, expensive trips.

- They prefer online ordering and research best choices.
- Canadian millennial travellers prefer micro-trips – several smaller trips per year.

SPLURGETTING – Budgeting for bucket-list trips and trading comfort for experiences. Canadian millennials are seeking authentic experiences and are willing to travel economically to splurge on an experience.



56% of the 1 million campers in Canada are millennials.

GLAMPING – Combining "glamorous" and "camping".

- 48% of North American millennials tried glamping in 2018.
- Couples with children represent close to half of all glampers.
- 56% of glampers are looking for unique accommodations such as treehouses, yurts, teepees or covered wagons during a vacation.



Economics

Share Economy – Thrives when goods and services are expensive, but incomes are low. Sharing a car, home, or other goods and services is being embraced by millennials. **Global revenues from the share economy are expected to reach \$335B by 2025.**

Micromobility refers to programs such as bike-share or electric-scooter rental that allows the users rent for a single trip.

- Rental scooters are activated via mobile apps and charge fees to unlock and per minute after.
- According to the scooter rental company *Lime*, 73% of their users were male, 78% were using it for commuting.
- As of July 30, 2020 there were 1,921 e-scooters on the streets of Edmonton.

Second-hand Economy

- 88% of those under 45 years of age and 84% of Albertans participate in the second-hand economy.
- In 2018 the second-hand economy was worth \$27.3B.
- Clothing, shoes, and accessories account for 30% of the second-hand economy in Canada.

Gig Economy – Freelance work or side hustles – is common among millennials due to the lack of well-paying, consistent work. **Often these jobs are virtual** (Instagram, Youtube, Etsy, etc.)

Dining

Millennials want unique experiences (*food as an event*), but also want convenience and value. When they take time to 'dine' it needs to include others or be social. They prioritize local (ethical) over fast food.

- Millennials are the largest category of food service spenders in Canada.
- More than 40% of Canadians based their restaurant decision on whether there is free Wi-Fi.
- **71% OF MILLENNIALS ORDER FOOD OR BEVERAGES FROM A RESTAURANT ONCE A WEEK OR MORE.**
- Millennials prioritize environmental stewardship and social responsibility in their restaurant choices.



Shopping Habits

Millennials shop online for convenience and value. This trend is changing the landscape for brick and mortar business.

In 2018:

- **More than 80% of Canadians shopped online.**
- **95% of internet users 25 to 34 years shopped online, while only 64% of internet users 65 years of age or older did so.**

HYPER SHOPPERS (affluent, educated, diverse and most likely millennial and female) account for 48% of all online purchases.

- Since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic, online revenue has doubled.

INFLUENCERS

- Millennials are more likely to try a product, service, volunteer, or donate if another millennial were to recommend it. "Influencer" is a Revenue Canada recognized occupation.
- Nearly three quarters (72%) of all millennials and iGens follow influencers on social media.
- 50% of millennials say they trust influencers.

Food Delivery Services

- According to Abacus Data, **60% of millennials have used third-party food delivery apps** such as Uber Eats and Skip the Dishes to order meals each month.
- In 2018, food-service orders made online, through websites and mobile apps, totaled more than \$4.3B in 2018 (a 44% increase from 2017).

MEAL KITS

- 1 in 5 Canadian millennials have subscribed to a meal kit because they are affordable, convenient, healthy, and customizable.
- The kits offer Instagram-worthy food photos, and a step-by-step guide to prepare food.



FOOD CHOICES

Those age 18 to 29 are:

3X MORE LIKELY TO IDENTIFY AS A VEGETARIAN, COMPARED TO THOSE 45+.

2X AS LIKELY AS BOOMERS OR THE SILENT GENERATION TO IDENTIFY AS A VEGAN.

FROZEN FOODS

- Gourmet frozen foods are on the rise with millennials for quick, affordable meals for families.
- **43% of millennials shop frozen food** and spend 9% more per shopping trip than other cohorts.
- In Canada, frozen food is **now valued at \$4.9B and growing.**
- Family-size portions are outpacing single-serve portions.

Beverages

Alcohol

Millennials treat alcohol as an experience. They want to know the story behind the drink, find unique flavours, support local, and have something to share. Overall, they are drinking less than their older counterparts.

LOCAL, CRAFT BEERS

- According to Statista, those aged 18 to 34 consume 38.7% of the beer in Alberta.
- 120 Independent craft breweries in Alberta, a jump from 18 in 2014.
- Local Alberta beer currently has a 10% market share.

SPIRITS

- **Craft distilling has grown at an annual rate of 30%**, driven by millennials entering their prime earning years.

Coffee

Millennials love coffee and are willing to pay more for gourmet.

- **70% of coffee consumed** by millennials is considered gourmet – cold brew, iced, or flavoured – and ethically sourced.
- **34% of millennials** factor in the cost of coffee to their decision-making process.
- The Coffee Association of Canada reported **16% of coffee drinkers used a loyalty card in 2018, while 7% ordered coffee through an app.**

Seltzers & Carbonated Water

Many millennials have turned to seltzers and flavoured sparkling waters as a healthy alternative to sugary carbonated drinks.

- The primary market for carbonated water is 25-40-year-olds.
- Millennials prefer gourmet flavours.
- Carbonated bottled water sales has grown 21%.

Houseplants are big with millennials who are delaying having children until they have some financial stability. Plants allow them to travel and still have something to nurture.

- **Garden-tainment:** Ways to enjoy the garden with friends and family by transforming outdoor spaces into entertaining spaces.
- **Portable Gardening:** Millennials want to be able to garden where ever they live, no matter how small the space or how long they'll be there.

Overall plant sales increased by eight per cent to \$1.5B from 2013 to 2018.

THINK INSIDE THE BOX

WITH A SAFE SPACE FOR SELF-REFLECTION

By Cory Schachtel

When Sameer Singh cofounded Shift Lab, its purpose was to use new design thinking to tackle old social problems.

And there are few social problems older than racism.

Design thinking seeks to understand humans as the imperfect creatures we are, and create solutions to our problems. A classic example is how to design the Perfect Wallet. Slots for money and cards seem obvious, but design thinking says: Now make it for someone with no hands. Imposing constraints actually expands your thinking, and brings you to the margins. And, Singh says, “It’s people on the margins who tend to be the experts, who are at the centre of these struggles as well as the solutions that are purportedly designed for them.”

The Shift Lab was created through a partnership between Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) and Skills Society Action Lab in 2016. Its formation was response to the work being done by EndPovertyEdmonton to reduce racism in the city.

ECF played an instrumental role in the development of Shift Lab, including creating the vision of Shift Lab with Skills Society, being the primary source of financing, supporting the broader development of Edmonton’s social innovation landscape,

and being “embedded” in the Shift Lab by way of Ashley Dryburgh, ECF’s Focus Grants Associate at the time.

Jump to 2017, after “Shift Lab 1.0” had spent a couple of years design thinking and talking with marginalized people about ways to fight racism. By October 2019, it produced a prototype partially prompted by a Martin Luther King Jr. quote, stating that the great stumbling block toward freedom is not the Ku Klux Klan, “but the white moderate who is more devoted to ‘order’ than to justice,” foreshadowing the concept currently known as “white fragility.”

“We call them the ‘sleepy middle,’” Singh says. “The folks in the centre, the ones who

experiences that contain products, tools and activities designed to inspire critical thought and reflection for recipients.

The concept for the subscription service originated as an Edmonton Shift Lab prototype and now the original Shift Lab team is taking it to the next level by overseeing the creation and distribution of the boxes. The demand has been incredible.

“We intended to have about 30 boxes go out to folks,” Singh says, “but the demand was insane. Within 48 hours, we had 1,000 people signing up, which Edmonton Community Foundation helped fund. And by now, we’ve sent out about 2,300 across the country and even in the U.S.”

“WE CALL THEM THE ‘SLEEPY MIDDLE’. THE FOLKS IN THE CENTRE, THE ONES WHO DON’T NECESSARILY UNDERSTAND SYSTEMIC RACISM, OR WHO CALL THEMSELVES COLOUR-BLIND. THEY ARE THE ONES WE NEED TO ENGAGE WITH AND SHIFT.”

– Sameer Singh

don’t necessarily understand systemic racism, or who call themselves colour-blind. They are the ones we need to engage with and shift.”

If they were sleepy, George Floyd’s death was a wake-up call. Much like the #MeToo movement forced men to look at their own behaviour through a new lens, so too did Floyd’s death. Black

Lives Matter rallies forced white people to reflect on their own actions and ideas.

The timing for Shift Lab’s prototype, sadly, could not have been better.

The prototype?

A box — a

subscription series of

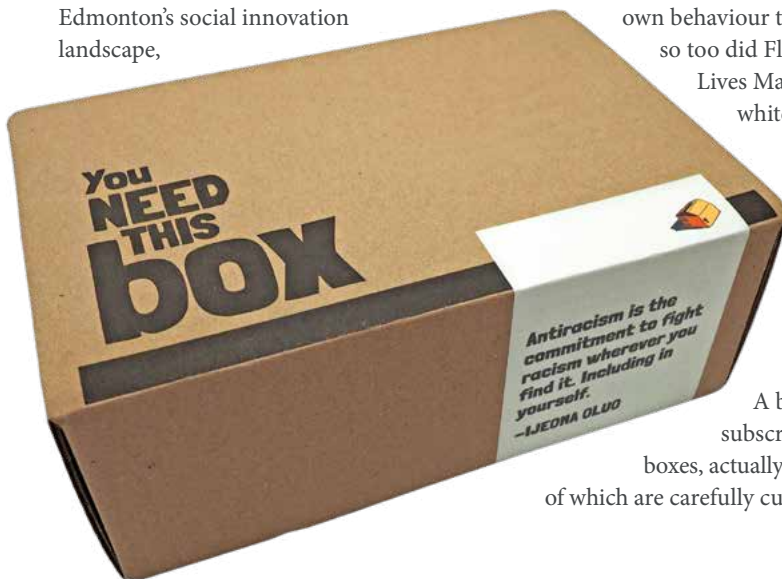
boxes, actually. The contents

of which are carefully curated learning

So, approaching a year since the first boxes went out, are they making an impact? Singh says he’s still figuring that out, but the point isn’t to “fix” racism in the sense of changing actual racists’ minds — a full-throated racist would never sign up to receive a box to begin with. It’s to get people in that “sleepy middle” to recognize when they’ve been complicit, or slipped up, or, more commonly, not said something when they should have.

“The box is not meant to make you feel guilty for being white; it’s meant for you to sit alone with your thoughts and have that inner conversation you may not have had before,” Singh says. “If this gets 1,000 people to talk to another 1,000 people about what they’ve learned, that’s success.” ■

Sign up for your box at youneedthisbox.ca



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Jeff, Megan, Matthew & Samuel Wagner

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