

FALL 2018

# LEGACY ACTION

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## FOREST THERAPY

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Edmonton-area  
conservation lands  
soothe the soul

## QUEEN OF LASTING HUGS

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Lois Hole's legacy  
fund is a forever gift

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Cover photo by Doris May; the Northern saw-whet owl, found on all Edmonton and Area Land Trust lands

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Bravo to the Edmonton and Area Land Trust, which is educating us about plants and animals and relieving the pressures of increasing urbanization, says Martin Garber-Conrad

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



*Martin Garber-Conrad*

Martin Garber-Conrad  
CEO

While attending a conference in England this summer, I had occasion to reflect on how widespread the local food movement is these days. In Brighton, an old tourist town on the coast, shops and restaurants highlighting locally harvested seafood, locally grown vegetables and locally baked bread are almost as pervasive as fish and chip shops and candy stores.

There is a real valuing of local producers and therefore of seeking to preserve agricultural land. This is another dimension added to long-standing interest in land conservation for esthetic or ecological reasons. Although we live in a much more sparsely populated part of the world, we share with other places the pressures of increasing urbanization and development. And because Edmonton is surrounded by some of the best farm land in the province, we have a particular urgency to expand our conservation efforts beyond untouched natural areas.

The challenges to doing that are considerable, including the already high cost of any land in or close to urban centres. Still, the effort is worth it and opportunities are arising that we might not have foreseen.

So, it's good to remember that more than a decade ago a couple of Edmonton city councillors and a few local conservation groups came together with a proposal to form a conservation land trust for our part of the world. The result, 10 years ago this fall, was the formation of the Edmonton and Area Land Trust. In its brief lifespan, EALT has preserved nearly a dozen properties in the Edmonton area through purchase or conservation easements.

EALT has also educated us about the birds and the bees — and the varieties of plants and animals that inhabit lands quite near our city. And EALT has highlighted the importance of connectivity — the role that corridors play in the movement of animals and preservation of many species. Even quite modest parcels can be “missing pieces” helping to make those connections.

It therefore gives me great pleasure to congratulate the Edmonton and Area Land Trust on its 10th anniversary and to commend its directors, donors, staff and volunteers for the work they do to preserve and enhance Edmonton's future. ECF has been proud to be a member of the organization since the beginning and will continue to host and support EALT's work for the foreseeable future.

– Martin Garber-Conrad



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ON THE  
COVER

# NATURAL TREASURE

*The Edmonton and Area Land Trust's conservation lands  
are beautiful sanctuaries you may have never  
even heard about, let alone seen*

BY: MINISTER FAUST

PHOTOGRAPHY: EDMONTON & AREA LAND TRUST AND ROXY HASTINGS



Glory Hills Conservation Lands



No matter how much you love the city, it makes you dirty. You can see it on the bottoms of your shoes, and if you're a barefoot strider your soles will gum-grit-and-grime after just a block or two. But that pollution doesn't stop at your skin. There's the smog that gets inside your body from all those cars and our annual western forest fires. And it goes past your lungs and inside your skull with the never-ending noise of traffic and commerce, and the never-ending pressures of work, family and global crises. So how can you escape it? How can you cleanse your body and your mind?

There's a path to purifying yourself. Anyone can take it, nearly any day of the year, and while it's highly addictive, it's completely good for you, it's free and it's easy. It's Edmonton's best-kept soul-saving secret: one giant serpentine path and 12 sparkling sanctuaries. Simply enter it to indulge in *shinrin-yoku*, Japanese for "forest bathing."

No, you don't need to take off your clothes, and you won't get sprayed with water. Just wander in the green to lose yourself in order to find yourself.

The serpentine path is the North Saskatchewan River Valley (three times bigger than Vancouver's Stanley Park and 22 times bigger than New York's Central Park); the 12 sanctuaries are the stunning treasure of the prosaically named Edmonton and Area Land Trust.

— “ —  
 We need to keep our natural areas ... citizens enjoy being there. The need was clear — Pamela Wight  
 — ”

The EALT, stewards of a series of donated emerald conservation lands inside and mostly outside city limits, is celebrating its first decade of existence, this year. While EALT's name won't win any poetry prizes, the names of the individual preserves might, including Glory Hills, Bunchberry Meadows, Ministik and Golden Ranches. They comprise a conservation network whose healing powers rival any therapist's couch or pharmacist's counter. As long ago as 2001, the American Psychological Association published its finding that "Green is good for you." Tests showed that 40 minutes of walking in green areas (as opposed to walking city streets, quiet reading or listening to music) decreased anger, increased pleasant emotions and improved concentration. As the APA reported, "children who live in greener environments have greater capacity for paying attention [and are] better able to delay gratification and inhibit impulses."

In mid-June, I took my two daughters, ages 11 and 8, to see the Larch Sanctuary, the only EALT reserve inside city limits. Located in the southerly Whitemud Creek ravine between Century Park and Rabbit Hill Road, the 24-hectare sanctuary is accessible via the south side of the overpass on 23rd Avenue or via footpaths from its bordering neighbourhoods.

Within a few minutes of us walking, the tinnitus of traffic faded to zero, and it was hard to remember we were inside a greater metro area of a million people. I asked ▶





A fawn sleeping in the grass at Boisvert's GreenWoods

my delighted daughters to describe what we were seeing as we saw it. Big Girl said, “There’s a lot of trees, purple flowers, yellow flowers, and oh! There’s a birdy! A duck! There’s a blue, metal, rustic bridge!” Little Girl added, “We’re looking at where the two small creeks join into a small river, and lots of small rocks!” Spotting a watercourse or maybe a culvert I hadn’t seen, Big Girl noted, “There’s also a secret tunnel . . . maybe Batman goes [into the Bat Cave] there!”

As we rose and fell with the landscape, we finally reached a clearing where the Whitemud Creek silently anticipated intermingling, downstream, with its Blackmud soulmate. Despite its name, the Whitemud at times resembled chocolate milk, reminding me of Milk River on Alberta’s southern border. But you don’t need to drive eight hours to encounter wildlife; the Larch Sanctuary provides home for woodpeckers, coyotes, foxes, deer, and even moose. We also saw a birdhouse-sized “bee hotel,” a human-made housing project for any of Alberta’s 300

native species of non-hiving bees that don’t make honey but pollinate crops, fruits and vegetables that are a third of our diet.

So, who banded together to protect such a beautiful area inside our city, and why?

“There was a clear decrease in natural areas — 16 per cent per year from the early 1990s were being lost,” says Pamela Wight, the executive director of the EALT.

The city and environmental groups were concerned, she said, and asked Edmontonians if the solution might be a land trust. The public agreed on the need, but wanted any trust to be arm’s-length, free from the changing political winds of municipal elections. The result was the non-profit Edmonton and Area Land Trust, which includes as founding members the philanthropic Edmonton Community Foundation, the City of Edmonton and the Urban Development Institute, as well as environmental groups. Its goal was to preserve ecologically significant Alberta Capital Region lands.

“We need to keep our natural areas,” says Wight. “Citizens enjoy being there. The need was clear.”

By 2010, the EALT had acquired natural areas at Golden Ranches and Glory Hills, joined by Ministik in 2011 and Pipestone Creek in 2012. That year, a private sector partner planted more than 30,000 trees, and by 2013 added a quarter of a million tree seedlings. Since then, the EALT has completed many major projects to steward its lands, making habitats safer for wildlife, adding nest boxes for cavity-nesting species, and removing invasive plants.

EALT is also very engaged in outreach: it’s added its interpretive Go Wild for Geocaching program; convened bee hotel workshops and erected numerous bee hotels on public and private land around Edmonton, to cultivate solitary bee habitat and generate awareness of the importance of pollinators; and conserved 30 hectares of the Smith Homestead in the Beaverhills International Biosphere Reserve and 300 hectares of Parkland County’s environmentally sensitive Devon Dunes habitat. With 12 conservation zones now under its protection, the EALT also partners with students and elders at amiskwaciy Academy and MacEwan University’s Aboriginal Studies program to work on Cree names for some of the land trust’s conservational preserves.

As my daughters and I continued joyfully navigating the Larch Sanctuary, I couldn’t help but think of that small chorus crying to colonize our magnificent wild spaces — whether inside the ravine we were exploring, or in the vast North Saskatchewan River Valley itself — with chain-store coffee shops and bars to drink away the think (as if Edmonton didn’t already have enough of those). But if more people could simply experience the wonder of our land trust’s natural areas, they’d know they don’t need beer or Starbucks to enjoy the glory of the green. They just need to breathe. And listen. And walk. By preserving this eco-network for future generations, the EALT is maintaining walls of sentinel trees, a protective habitat for herds of proud deer and legions of hyper-productive bees, and a living heart of jade that science proves energizes and purifies our individual and collective bodies and minds.



## A brief timeline of the Edmonton and Area Land Trust's first 10 years:

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### 2009:

- Secures Hicks property (in Strathcona County, south of Hastings Lake)

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### 2010:

- Secures Golden Ranches (adjacent to Cooking Lake) and Glory Hills (north of Stony Plain)

---

### 2011:

- Secures Ministik (in Camrose County)

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### 2012:

- Secures Pipestone Creek (east of Wetaskiwin)
- Partners with a private company to plant 30,000 trees on EALT lands

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### 2013:

- Wins an Alberta Emerald Award for environmental excellence
- Publishes the first Guide to Species at Risk in Alberta
- Plants another 250,000 trees on EALT lands

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### 2014:

- Secures Boisvert's GreenWoods (north of Morinville)

---

### 2015:

- Secures Coates (north of Calmar)
- Launches Go Wild for Geocaching and Protecting Pollinators programs

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### 2016:

- Publishes Species at Risk in Alberta Children's Activity Booklet
- Secures Bunchberry Meadows (south of Enoch Cree Nation) \*
- Publishes Nature's Nourishment Recipe Book, featuring native plants

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### 2017:

- Secures Larch Sanctuary (first property within city of Edmonton)
- Secures Lu Carbyn Nature Sanctuary (in Lac St. Anne County)
- Launches the EALT Kids program, with Discover Nature Kits, resources, and website

---

### 2018:

- Partners with amiskwacyi Academy to develop Cree names for select properties
- Secures Devon Dunes, a sensitive habitat in Parkland County
- Secures the Smith Homestead in the Beaverhill International Biosphere Reserve

\* in partnership with the Nature  
Conservancy of Canada ■

# EVERLASTING *HUGS*

Photo by  
Sima Khorrami



“**H**ow does a child know they’re a ballerina?” asks Tracy Patience, executive director of Dickinsfield Amity House, a resource centre for low-income families. “We could have all these amazing ballerinas in our preschool that just don’t know, and will never get to know.”

So twice a month, the preschool at Amity House becomes a dance studio — or an art studio, drama room or drum circle. It just depends on who is leading Arts for Tots that day.

“We wanted them exposed to as many art forms as we could (give them),” says Patience.

In 2007, Arts for Tots was an early beneficiary of an Edmonton Community Foundation field of interest fund, created in memory of the late Lois Hole, Alberta’s beloved lieutenant-governor from 2000 to 2005. With such funds, donors identify the



School children receive tomato plants from Hole’s Greenhouses

*Lois Hole's legacy fund supports, in perpetuity, her love of kids, their education and the arts*

BY: THERESE KEHLER

kinds of projects they want to support, but the Foundation selects the specific charities so that emerging needs can be met.

The Lois Hole Care and Nurture Legacy Fund fit perfectly, says Patience. "Lois Hole had a huge heart for children and also for supporting the arts. Our grant brought both of those things together."

Edmonton Community Foundation granted Arts for Tots \$46,800 over three years, including support from the Lois Hole fund. When the funding ended, Patience adjusted her budget so it could continue. For motivation, she recalled the magic of one little boy holding a drum for the first time.

"This little guy got this drum and was just so connected to it," she says. "As soon as he

got it, the head went back, the eyes closed and off he went."

Patience likes to imagine that if Hole, a.k.a. the Queen of Hugs, could have attended a class, she would have done exactly the same thing.

Hole was an ardent supporter of the arts, a tireless crusader for education and was passionate about growing things — crops and children alike. As a businesswoman, school trustee and lieutenant-governor, she took every opportunity to rally Albertans to embrace those causes.

Bill Hole recalls his mom played the piano, loved the opera and had CBC Radio playing 24/7 in the home. Themes of arts, literacy and education were woven into many of her speeches. ➤

—“—  
It's with the children that our future lies, and it is they who will determine the shape of things to come  
- Lois Hole, April 2001

”—



Lois Hole sharing her love of reading



Exploring creativity, thanks to Arts for Tots



Lois Hole playing the piano at home

In creating a legacy fund, Bill and his brother Jim gave Albertans a way to honour their mom by supporting many institutions she cared about deeply, as they improve their community. Since it is structured as an endowment, the fund will carry on in perpetuity.

The fund shows how even the smallest donations can go a long, long way, says Bill Hole. “The general public made contributions, some as little as \$10,” he says. “People may have forgotten that many years ago they made a contribution, (yet) it’s still working.”

For example, in October 2017, students drawn from elementary through high school “voted” in Alberta’s municipal elections. Their mock ballots didn’t count that day but will in the long run.

“They turn 18 and it’s, ‘Oh, I’ve voted before, I can do it again.’ That intimidation factor is gone,” says Lindsay Mazzucco, with the non-profit organization CIVIX.

Thanks to a \$47,000 grant that CIVIX received — supported in part by the Lois Hole fund — 2017 was the first year a student vote was held during an Alberta municipal campaign. The money supported 193 participating schools in Edmonton, helping with teacher guides, worksheets, posters, ballot boxes and voting screens.

The result? The students, just like their parents, voted in Don Iveson as mayor — and 18,000 young Edmontonians learned about democracy and civic duty.

“Teachers comment about how engaged the kids get in the elections,” Mazzucco says. “And the kids believe they know more about the election than their parents.”

In 2015, two Edmonton theatre companies received grants to expand existing student outreach programs that meld arts and education — projects Lois Hole would have embraced. Time and again, she

“  
The arts invite us to reach within ourselves and explore our motivations, our prejudices, our very reasons for being  
— Lois Hole, June 2003  
”

chastised those who said arts are pleasant but non-essential.

On Theatre Prospero’s stage, Shakespeare’s Macbeth was reimagined, with help from Frog Lake First Nation students, into a Cree tragedy incorporating Indigenous language, Canadian history and an evil spirit named Wihtiko.

At Rapid Fire Theatre, the fast and funny world of improv theatre is teaching at-risk teens — those exposed to drugs, violence, law enforcement — to find positive ways to express themselves.

Theatre Prospero’s artistic director Mark Henderson saw the effect of performances of Pawâkan Macbeth on school groups in November 2017. “For some students, it was their introduction to anything to do with Cree culture, at all. And for some students it was their first introduction to anything to do with Macbeth, at all.”

For Karen Brown Fournell, general manager at Rapid Fire Theatre, the value is best measured by individual anecdotes of success: the street kid who went from an improv class, to theatre volunteering, to returning to school, to contemplating university. “It’s about saving each one of them. One at a time.” ■

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# SUPPORTING THE STAFF

*The van Woudenberg family believes a charity's operational costs should be as well-funded as its programming for clients*

BY: CAITLIN CRAWSHAW



Els and Walter van Woudenberg

These days, Els and Walter van Woudenberg live in the mountains of Colorado with their dogs and horses, but they remain forever connected to Edmonton.

Born in the Netherlands, the couple lived in Australia and South Africa before immigrating to Canada and settling in Edmonton in 1977. That same year, Walter, an engineer and entrepreneur, launched Nilex, a company engineering geosynthetic products such as soil reinforcement and erosion control systems for the construction and resource sectors.

The company grew in leaps and bounds, and the van Woudenbergs moved to Colorado in 1988 to expand their business to the U.S., keeping their headquarters in Edmonton, where it remains today. After selling the company in 2013, the socially minded couple decided to use their retirement to commit themselves to philanthropy in a big way. “Giving back with engagement is now the primary focus of our lives,” says Walter.

As part of this, the couple connected with

Edmonton Community Foundation to start a fund focused on helping children and youth. They opted to create a donor-advised fund in order to advise how the annual disbursements are made and, after much research, chose to support the iHuman Youth Society.

Created in 1997, the organization offers arts programs for young people between 12 and 24 years of age who are living on the streets and struggling with personal problems like gang involvement, mental health issues, family neglect or abuse, and legal entanglements.

About 80 per cent of the organization's clients are Indigenous youth.

“It is a safe haven for the most disadvantaged sector of our youth,” says Walter.

The van Woudenberg family had a good idea of how it wanted its money to help its chosen organization, but the van Woudenberg Family Fund is unusual in its support of administrative costs — specifically salaries for staff.

“There's a lot of stuff in the media about charities needing to put every donated dollar to programs — but the charity needs adequate funding of its operational costs to run well,” says Kathy Hawkesworth, ECF's director of donor services.

She points out that many donors don't specify how their money is used, allowing charities to cover administration costs if they need to. It is rare for a donor to actually mandate that their money pay for behind-the-scenes costs, which many consider less exciting than programs for clients.

Walter explains that arranging the fund's focus that way is a conscious effort to contend with the pressure charities sometimes face from the community

to keep their administrative costs as low as possible. In his view, this isn't just unfair to staff, it's impractical for the organization.

“I think it's a big mistake. It's important to have adequately compensated, skilled people at the helm to make sure the organization's budget is well spent,” he says. “Cutting costs at the top end by not compensating people properly puts at risk the organization's ability to properly manage its mission.”

As a longtime businessman, Walter has seen first-hand the importance of investing in the right people again and again. He's also seen it play out in his charitable work, recalling an organization in Nicaragua that once upset donors when it ran 15 per cent over budget one year because of administrative costs — until he explained to the donors the return on investment from paying good salaries.

“”  
GIVING BACK WITH  
ENGAGEMENT IS NOW  
THE PRIMARY FOCUS  
OF OUR LIVES

“You can't perform well if your prime consideration is to pay the rent and put food on the table because your pay is so little,” he says.

When it comes to iHuman, Walter knows that the organization's staff, especially its executive director, face a “seemingly impossible task” in helping traumatized youth gain resilience and independence: “The last thing I would ever suggest is that, at the end of the day, they also struggle to make ends meet.” ■

# ANIMAL BONDING

*Giving free veterinary care to vulnerable pet owners helps keep them safe and healthy, too*

BY: JENELLE JENSEN

“If they can’t afford a pet, then why do they have one?”

That’s the most common question asked of volunteers at Alberta Helping Animals Society, a non-profit organization ensuring that people living in poverty in Edmonton have access to free veterinary care for their companion animals.

The answer is simple, says Terri McCallum, the veterinary community co-ordinator for the society. “For the majority of our clients, their animal is the reason they wake up in the morning.”

pick up donations and help with the animals. While its focus is pet health, the program enhances the owners’ overall wellness, too, says Varnhagen.

“These are people at-risk for or suffering with mental health problems, addictions, devastating illnesses, extreme poverty, domestic violence — any situation where they have very low income — and they have this really important cat or dog for mental support.”

Approximately 100,000 people live in poverty in Edmonton, and people living in poverty are more likely to have poor

mental health, according to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

Since 2014, the society’s program has assisted 3,500 pets. This fall, it expects to open a clinic with the Edmonton Community Veterinary Clinic, a premise in the Calder neighbourhood that will house a full-service vet clinic and also be a resource for information about animal care for anyone who wants it, says Varnhagen.

“People need pets. We shouldn’t look down (at them) just because they are down on their luck.” ■

— “ —  
PEOPLE NEED PETS.  
WE SHOULDN’T LOOK  
DOWN (AT THEM) JUST  
BECAUSE THEY ARE  
DOWN ON THEIR LUCK

— “ —  
Their pet is sometimes what stops them from feeding their addictions or taking their own lives, agree McCallum and Connie Varnhagen, the society’s president.

Supported by two grants totalling \$102,030 from Edmonton Community Foundation, the society delivers animal care and pet food by vehicle, and also finds shelter for animals when necessary.

About 40 volunteers, including veterinarians, technologists and community members, keep the service running. Veterinarians provide examinations and spay/neuter surgery, and community members offer administrative support,





Shirley, with her husband Jorn Brauer

# REMEMBERING SHIRLEY

*Friends of outstanding science teacher fundraised online  
to quickly create academic award in her name*

BY: CAITLIN CRAWSHAW

For 26 years, Shirley Brauer taught chemistry. She was a passionate educator who challenged high-achieving students — coaching teams for the Science Olympics, for instance — and lifted up students who struggled.

“Kids would say, ‘If you want to pass chemistry, you take Brauer,’” says her husband, Jorn Brauer. A fellow educator, he admired Shirley’s commitment to helping all students succeed, recalling that she often stayed after classes to offer extra help and visited sick students at home to catch them up on what they’d missed in class.

Shirley spent most of her career at Paul Kane High School in St. Albert, Alta. Her son, Chris, attended the school and remembers the lasting impression she made on his friends and classmates: “She had an excellent rapport with the students and was especially good with students who were struggling or not doing well.”

Chris points out that with a master’s degree in chemistry and an extraordinary intellect, his mother might have taught at a post-secondary level or continued with her own education. “There was really no limit to her educational capabilities, but [teaching high school chemistry] was the right fit for her,” he says.

The Brauer family — plus countless friends and colleagues — lost Shirley to lymphoma in 2015. It was sudden and heartbreaking, says Ross Tyson, a family friend who worked with Jorn and was taught by Shirley at the start of her career. Tyson and two other friends, Doug Ledgerwood and Dick Baker, met for drinks at the University of Alberta’s Faculty Club shortly after their friend’s death and discussed the possibility of creating a scholarship.

“We decided to create an award at Paul Kane High School, since she’d taught there for many years,” he says.



Because Shirley was very keen on gender parity in science, they decided to create an award supporting young women in particular. After running it by Shirley's family, as well as the school, the friends reached out to Edmonton Community Foundation.

"We wanted an external body to deal with it and we knew that ECF is an excellent steward of funds," says Tyson, who worked with the organization during his time at the ECF-supported Boys and Girls Club of Edmonton.

A gift of just \$100 was enough to make the fund official and kickstart an online fundraising campaign via [canadahelps.org](http://canadahelps.org). In less than three years, the fund has grown to \$27,000.

ECF donor advisor Matt Mandrusiak explains that it's not unusual for the foundation to create online fundraising campaigns to help funds grow, although this campaign has been particularly successful: "It's exploded in a relatively short amount of time."

Creating the fund at ECF means that the fund's founders needn't establish their own non-profit or decide how to invest the money. "We have more than a dozen investment counsellors to take care of that," says Mandrusiak.

The Shirley Brauer Award For Women in Science has already been awarded to two young women at Paul Kane High School who demonstrated courage, ingenuity, determination, compassion and an ability to synthesize scientific ideas — all qualities Shirley embodied.

Last year's winner, Ayisha Mitha, was an enthusiastic science student and active in the Science Olympics during her time at the school. In spring 2018, she wrapped up her first year of science at the University of Alberta, where she is mainly taking biology courses (especially human physiology and cell biology) with an eye toward studying medicine.



THERE WAS REALLY NO LIMIT TO HER EDUCATIONAL CAPABILITIES, BUT TEACHING HIGH SCHOOL CHEMISTRY WAS THE RIGHT FIT FOR HER



Mitha says the \$1,000 award helped offset steep tuition fees this year, but the real value of the award isn't financial.

"I never met Shirley, but from what we heard at school, she was a really great science teacher," she says. "It's really inspirational to receive this kind of recognition. I'm definitely honoured." ■



# MODEST FUND, MIGHTY IMPACT

*With the Aboriginal Services Fund, two private individuals  
are helping people they care about deeply*

BY: ANNA MARIE SEWELL PHOTOGRAPHY: MARC J CHALIFOUX PHOTOGRAPHY

For Indigenous people from First Nations and rural communities, arriving in Edmonton presents unfamiliar challenges.

Whether they're coming for work or school, bringing their children for emergency health care, or being released from jail into the community, they may feel overwhelmed, lost, alone.

The New in Town program assists them. Run by the Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, it is accessible 24 hours a day through a help line, Facebook and email, and often by immediate greeting.

"When Greyhound was downtown, (its) staff would refer people to our after-hours number when they'd see someone with that 'What next?' look on their face," says Cheryl Whiskeyjack, the society's executive director.

New in Town is supported, in part, by the Aboriginal Services Fund, one of Edmonton Community Foundation's funds serving the Indigenous community.

The fund was started in 2014, by a donor who was moved to consider systemic injustices Indigenous people endure, after the Canadian government's 2008 official apology for residential schools.

"When you see children growing up in challenging situations, you have to ask, were I in that situation, would I be able to come out of it well?" said the man, who started the fund with his wife and wishes to be anonymous. "I don't think I'd have that strength."

While the fund's grant total to date is modest — approximately \$2,300 — its impact is not.



Macikosisân & Kâwanihot Iskwew / Macbeth & Lady Macbeth  
performed by Curtis Peeteetuce and Allyson Pratt

“  
SOME PEOPLE THINK THAT ONLY  
MILLIONAIRES CAN START ENDOWMENTS  
BUT THAT IS SIMPLY NOT TRUE

Noel Xavier, a donor advisor at Edmonton Community Foundation says, “some people think that only millionaires can start endowments but that is simply not true. At ECF, it's about the impact that people can make together to create a sustainable future for the causes they care about most.”

The fund has also assisted Theatre Prospero, helping to support Pawâkan Macbeth, an Indigenous retelling of Shakespeare's play that began with a 2015 residency in the

Frog Lake Cree school. And it contributed to Native Counselling Services of Alberta, which helps Indigenous people gain fair and equitable access to the province's justice, children services and corrections systems.

“It's been wonderful to hear about the grants that have been made from our fund,” says the donor. “We have told our young children about the fund and our family plans to make more donations to it over time.” ■

# A MORE NATURAL WAY TO PLAY

*Nature-focused playground blooms with benefits for children's health and development*

BY: C.B.W. CASWELL ILLUSTRATION: JULIA MINAMATA

Children play a little differently in a new playground at a child care facility in the east Edmonton neighbourhood of Fulton Place.

They climb a net tied in the shape of a spiderweb, hop across stone platforms, and scoot through a tunnel shaped like a log. When zooming down the smooth stone slide, they see nearby garden boxes and young apple trees lining the 896-square-metre space.

Inspiring children with a nature-focused playground was a priority when the Fulton Child Care Association created the outdoor space for babies and infants up to five years old under their care.

“We wanted to create a play space that enables tangible interaction with nature and also facilitates opportunities for caregivers to develop related activities,” says Chantelle Leidl, former co-chair of the Fulton Child Care Association playground committee. It also “provides esthetic value for all who walk by.”

The Fulton Child Care playground committee received \$72,000 for the \$250,000 site from Edmonton Community Foundation. The committee found that, for at least 20 years, researchers have identified an array of benefits for children who play amid such natural elements as trees, boulders and sand, instead of traditional playground equipment like metal monkey bars.

The children's self-directed play is more imaginative, they develop cognitive and problem-solving skills that help them learn better and they have less depression and more social interaction. In the book *Dirt is Good*, microbial ecosystem scientist

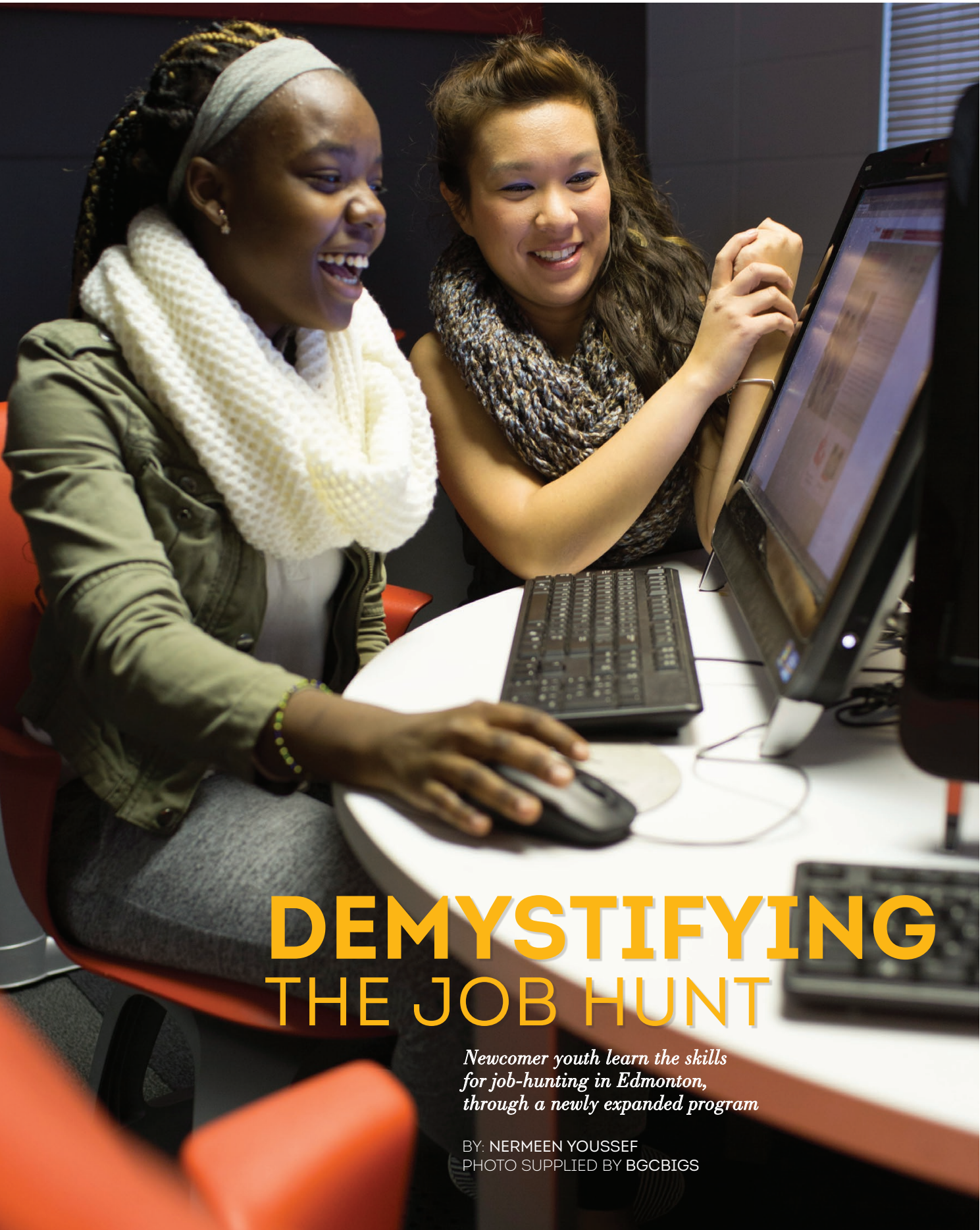
Jack Gilbert says playing in outdoor and unsanitized spaces greatly improves children's immune systems and overall health, and a study by Telemark University College in Norway showed that playing in natural, uneven terrain improved children's motor functions.

A survey taken five months after Fulton's space was completed also revealed that 75 per cent of children surveyed talked at home about the space, showing that an appreciation of nature is something children take with them wherever they go.

In 10 years, when its trees and shrubs have grown, Fulton's space will be even more effective than now, says Leidl, who envisions the fruit of the apple trees someday providing quick, nutritious snacks for active youngsters, too.

“And every year it will get better and better.” ■





# DEMYSTIFYING THE JOB HUNT

*Newcomer youth learn the skills  
for job-hunting in Edmonton,  
through a newly expanded program*

BY: NERMEEN YOUSSEF  
PHOTO SUPPLIED BY BGCBIGS

**M**y Canadian friend from university seemed perplexed when I asked her why she didn't leave a space for her photo on the warm, freshly printed resume she held between her hands. "A photo? It's not an audition," she joked. "We don't do that here."

I was puzzled. There I was, a fresh graduate about to apply for another job, realizing that the job-hunting skills I acquired in my country before moving to Canada were not doing me any favours. While I figured it out with help from some Canadian friends and the career centre at my university, I still wondered, what if you don't have good command of the language? What if you were simply, new? Where do you start, especially if you are a teenager or very young adult looking for your very first job?

A newly expanded version of a youth employment strategy run by Boys & Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters, which launched in July 2018, has the answers.

BGCBig's Youth Employment is a strategy that supports youth between the ages of 13 and 24 who come from low-income, Indigenous and newcomer families, as well as youth in-care, through mentorships, job placements and skill-development.

Originally a program named Skilled 4 Success that took one to 10 days to complete and taught such select job-hunting skills as resumé writing, the BGCBig's Youth Employment strategy is vastly more comprehensive. Over the next three years, it aims to help more than 130 youth develop deeper competence at job-hunting and an array of complementary skills, at no cost to them.

"The strategy is to ensure that youth develop relevant skills, build positive relationships with corporations in our community and are ultimately placed in after-school and summer employment to help support their families," says Danisha Bhaloo, the manager of fund development at BGCBig's.

The BGCBig's Youth Employment strategy was made possible with \$50,000 from the Royal Bank of Canada and \$120,000 from Edmonton Community Foundation.

"ECF has been there when we needed them, always, in ensuring that the needs of our kids and families are met," says Bhaloo.

Nearly a quarter of the 5,300 youth served by BGCBig's over the past seven years came from newcomer and immigrant families. During focus groups, the majority of youth voiced the need to obtain jobs in order to help their families overcome the constraints of their socio-economic status and asked for support in creating individual and professional networks for themselves.

In my volunteer experience helping to settle newcomers in Edmonton, I saw how having the appropriate guidance and skills for finding dignified work, especially at a young age, is often essential to the stability

their parents' networks, an advantage not shared by newcomer families. And although some newcomer support agencies offer short-term programs to help new Canadians understand the job market, and walk them through applications and job market expectations, most of those target adults.

The expanded BGCBig's Youth Employment strategy now includes practical job-hunting lessons, such as mock interviews. It also offers personal finance education, post-secondary opportunities learning sessions, career advice from professionals in different fields and lessons in self-care.

Individual needs of selected youth participants are assessed by the program co-ordinator, who recommends a tailored plan outlining which program sessions would be most suited to the participant.

"It can take from eight months to a year to complete the program, based on each



I WORKED AS A CASHIER... I SUCKED AT IT BECAUSE I DIDN'T KNOW THE CANADIAN CURRENCY WELL AND I MADE MISTAKES. IT WAS A PRETTY AWFUL TRANSITION AND CULTURE SHOCK



and livelihood of newcomer families. Several Albertans I spoke to who immigrated to Canada as teenagers, agreed. They also told me they found their first job through other immigrants, but that it was tough going.

"I worked as a cashier in Londonderry Mall. I sucked at it because I didn't know the Canadian currency well and I made mistakes," recalled Nada Chehayeb, who emigrated from Lebanon in the late 1970s, at the age of 16. "It was a pretty awful transition and culture shock."

Research shows that more than 70 per cent of Canadians get their first job through

participant's skills," said Bhaloo. "It's flexible in meeting the individual needs of our youth."

She wants all participants to acquire skills that will help them transition into jobs smoothly. A significant percentage of youth will also have mentors guide them through the process.

With almost 3,000 enthusiastic volunteers of diverse backgrounds and interests, as well as partnerships with community partners and local companies, BGCBig's is well-positioned to help youth overcome barriers to integration into their community. ■

# Visible Minority WOMEN IN EDMONTON

Edmonton Vital Signs is an annual check-up conducted by Edmonton Community Foundation, in partnership with Edmonton Social Planning Council, to measure how the community is doing. This year we will also be focusing on individual issues, VITAL TOPICS, that are timely and important to Edmonton. Watch for these in each issue of Legacy in Action, and in the full issue of Vital Signs that will be released in October of this year.

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

## DEFINITIONS

### 'VISIBLE MINORITY'

Refers to persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.

**RACIALIZED:** Racialized gender refers to the effects of race and gender processes on individuals, families, and communities. This concept recognizes that women do not experience race and gender similarly.

**AUDIBLE MINORITY:** An individual whose accent is different from the mainstream community. It usually is used to refer to accent discrimination, and is part of a multi-faceted and interconnected web of prejudice that includes race, gender, sexuality, and many other notions of identity, whether chosen or imposed.

ALMOST  
4 IN 10  
EDMONTONIANS  
ARE A VISIBLE  
MINORITY

## VISIBLE MINORITY WOMEN IN EDMONTON

In 2016, approximately 348,895 people reported belonging to a visible minority group in Edmonton. Just over half were women and girls.

The highest proportion of visible minorities include South Asian at 86,550 individuals, Chinese at 57,715 individuals and Black at 54,285 individuals.

## EDUCATION

Visible minority women (born in Canada) are more likely to have a post-secondary degree, AND (whether born in Canada or not) it is more likely to be in a non-traditional field.

47.7% of Canadian-born visible minority women of core working age had a university degree.

25.8% of same-aged women who were not a visible minority had a university degree.

### MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY

	NOT A VISIBLE MINORITY	VISIBLE MINORITY
	WOMEN	WOMEN
Physical and life sciences and technologies	2.9%	5.7%
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	2.5%	4.8%
Architecture, engineering, and related technologies	3.0%	5.5%

DESPITE VISIBLE MINORITY WOMEN BEING MORE LIKELY TO HAVE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE EMPLOYED IN LOWER-INCOME JOBS.

## did you know?

According to Statistics Canada, generation status indicates how many generations a person and their family have been in Canada.

- **FIRST GENERATION:** Persons born outside Canada.
- **SECOND GENERATION:** Persons born in Canada with at least one parent born outside Canada.
- **THIRD GENERATION OR MORE:** Persons born in Canada with both parents born in Canada

## EMPLOYMENT

### WAGE GAP

Visible minority women earn **70.1%** of what all men earn, and 84.4% of what visible minority men earn.

### DISCRIMINATION

Over 20% of visible minority women in Canada experienced some discrimination due to: ethnicity, race, skin colour, religion, or language. Half of those reported discrimination in their workplace or when applying for a job.

### TOP 3 INDUSTRIES OF EMPLOYMENT FOR IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN EDMONTON

HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**25.4%**

RETAIL TRADE

**14.6%**

ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICES

**11.7%**

Higher prevalence of low income among visible minority women compared with women who are not a visible minority.

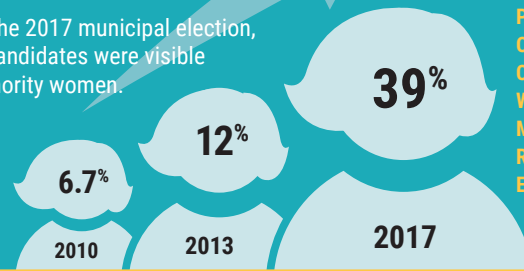
# VISIBLE MINORITY WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Across Canada, only 7% of municipal council seats are held by visible minorities, according to a study of the 50 largest cities.

**DESPITE MORE VISIBLE MINORITY WOMEN RUNNING IN EACH ELECTION, THERE ARE NO VISIBLE MINORITY WOMEN ON EDMONTON CITY COUNCIL.**

## WOMEN RUNNING FOR EDMONTON CITY COUNCIL

In the 2017 municipal election, 7 candidates were visible minority women.



PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN CANDIDATES WHO WERE VISIBLE MINORITY THAT RAN IN EACH ELECTION

## HEALTH

### HEALTH DATA GAP ON VISIBLE MINORITIES IN CANADA

- Visible minorities are often treated as a single category, ignoring differences by race, ethnic origin, and other characteristics.
- The data gap is larger among visible minority older adults.

#### The research tells us:

- most chronic conditions are lower among visible minority women than among the rest of the female population, but
- self-reported general health ratings tended to be lower among visible minority women aged 15 and over than among same-aged women who were not a visible minority.

Research is important for this group because of the *"healthy immigrant"* effect. Canada's immigration guidelines favour healthy individuals, meaning that newcomers tend to be healthier than Canadian-born individuals. This trend does not continue over time and health becomes a factor for older adult immigrants.

### ECF VITAL Work

INDO-CANADIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (ICWA) received \$69,000 to support funding for an Executive Director through 2018-2021. This will ensure ICWA has a strong leader in place to grow its capacity and meet the needs of a growing and underserved group of people: immigrant women.

## HATE CRIMES & DISCRIMINATION

ALBERTA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION



From April 2016 to March 2017

8%

of the complaints by individuals in Alberta were due to their race/colour (204 of 2,657).

### RACIAL MINORITIES, WHETHER BORN IN CANADA OR NOT, EXPERIENCE:

- Lower incomes than non-visible minority immigrants, even after they have been in Canada for well over a decade.
- Housing discrimination. According to the Women's Economic Council, landlords frequently discriminate against immigrant women on the basis of their gender, national origin, race, the presence of children, and their employment and income status.

## SAFETY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Visible minorities report feeling less safe after dark.
- Visible minorities are **more likely** to report signs of social disorder in their community.
- Victimization rate is lower among visible minorities who report a strong sense of belonging to their community.

## VISIBLE MINORITY SENIORS

EDMONTON'S SENIORS ARE DIVERSE.

PEOPLE AGED  
**65 - 74**  
**10%**

ARE VISIBLE MINORITIES

PEOPLE AGED  
**75+**  
**8%**

ARE VISIBLE MINORITIES

VISIBLE MINORITY GRANDMOTHERS MORE LIKELY TO RESIDE WITH GRANDCHILDREN.

In 2011 the percentage of women (aged 45 and over) living with their grandchildren:

**15.0%**

OF VISIBLE MINORITY WOMEN

**3.3%**

OF NON-VISIBLE MINORITY WOMEN

## VISIBLE MINORITY POLICE OFFICERS

AROUND  
**8.4%**  
OF CANADIAN OFFICERS

**14%**  
OF EDMONTON POLICE

## CONFIDENCE IN THE POLICE

The percentage of people who say they have confidence in the police:

**58%**  
OF VISIBLE MINORITIES

**68%**  
OF NON-VISIBLE MINORITIES



### did you know?

On February 1, 2017, Premier Rachel Notley proclaimed February as Black History Month, recognizing the contributions people of African and Caribbean descent have made to the province.

According to the 2011 census, Alberta has the third highest black population among Canadian provinces.

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