

# SPUR

Calgary Foundation / Spring 2017

# 2

ways Calgarians are  
getting a boost in their  
careers—and lives

## Education for all

Program builds confidence  
for Indigenous youth

## Independent and engaged

Keeping older people  
involved in the community

## Spirit of a People

Leroy Little Bear and  
the return of wild bison



## Compassion, Respect, Inclusion

THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY of Canadian Confederation is a milestone moment to reflect on our past and imagine a future we can all build.

It's a time to celebrate our nation's values of compassion, respect and inclusion, and remind ourselves of the importance of protecting those values and passing them on to future generations.

It's also a time to reflect on what we have learned from the past and an opportunity to ensure those lessons are incorporated into our path forward.

The Calgary Foundation's purpose is to support charities to build a community where ALL flourish, and ALL belong. How do we accomplish that big task?

We rely on the giving spirit and broad insights of a diverse group of people who come together to create communities that are welcoming for all. In this issue, you will meet some of these people and learn about a

few of the initiatives funded by the generosity of Calgarians.

People like Board member Kay Best and Committee member Tim Fox. Initiatives like the Rotary Tom Jackson Stay in School Program and the Calgary Drop-In & Rehab Centre's innovative WoodWorks woodshop. And donors like the late Joy Harvie Maclaren, whose legacy lives on.

We're also honoured to showcase our support for meaningful reconciliation that strengthens our ties with Indigenous communities in the feature Bridging the Cultural Gap, beginning on page 10.

We are in a time when the values of respect, compassion and inclusion seem to be unduly threatened, so it's more important than ever to hold steadfast to these values and ensure they are reflected in all that we do, and that they remain part of our fabric for the next 150 years and beyond. ■



The Calgary Foundation's purpose is to support charities to build a community where ALL flourish, and ALL belong. How do we accomplish that big task?

**Eva Friesen**  
President & CEO,  
Calgary Foundation

# P.28

**Tim Fox brings a unique Indigenous perspective to community-building work.**

Tim Fox, photographed with a traditional Indigenous medicine wheel carpet. The design represents balance within each individual, and is used in Fox's work with Indigenous youth leadership programs to symbolize empowerment, cultural connections and healing.

**SPUR**  
Calgary Foundation  
Spring 2017

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For a decade, Jane's Walk has been bringing Calgarians together to discover, celebrate and learn about their communities.



## Daughter of the West

**Joy Maclaren lived and breathed the giving spirit of her father, Eric Harvie**

By Paula Trotter

**"T**HERE WAS A CHINOOK blowing through her all the time." That's how Donna Livingstone describes the late Joy Harvie Maclaren, the Prairie-raised, warm-hearted and spirited daughter of influential Calgary philanthropist Eric Harvie.

"She was always a daughter of the West," says Livingstone, president and CEO of the Glenbow Museum. "She was her father's daughter."

Harvie, whose community work included founding the Glenbow, made his fortune from mineral rights in the late 1940s. He led by example in teaching his three children—Joy, Don and Neil—the importance of using wealth to help others succeed.

"Both she and her father were supportive of learning and education," says Livingstone, who edited a collection of Maclaren's personal essays titled *Spirit of Joy*. "What really caught her heart was a commitment to Indigenous studies and Indigenous education."

Maclaren had immense respect for First Nations culture, particularly its artistic workmanship and connection to nature. She was a champion of Aboriginal



Joy Harvie Maclaren was given the name New Sun in 1995 by elders from the Blackfoot, Mohawk and Ojibway nations in a ceremony at Carleton University. Maclaren was proud of the ceremonial shawl representing her New Sun name in gold and copper sequins.

traditions, and encouraged younger generations to retain their culture and language.

That was why Maclaren created funds through the Calgary Foundation in the mid-1990s, which awarded scholarships to Aboriginal post-secondary students in Alberta who demonstrated an interest in preserving their traditional culture.

She established other awards for students in Nunavut, Quebec and Ontario, and invested in numerous other projects focused on Aboriginal education, including the New Sun Conference on Aboriginal Arts at Carleton University in Ottawa, where she lived the latter part of her life. She died in 2014.

"Through her support of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, Joy always hoped these students would bring what they had learned back to their communities, whether they had studied nursing or became teachers or leaders in management," says Darlene Chrapko, student awards officer with the Calgary Foundation.

"I think her legacy is the support of a generation of Indigenous scholars who were able to pursue their dreams, and pursue education," says Livingstone. ■





“

We have a lot to learn from Aboriginal people. In working with Aboriginals throughout Canada, my faith, and I mean faith not beliefs, has very much deepened by interacting with them. There is a different sense of time, it doesn't matter, there are no borders.

”

—Joy Harvie Maclaren,  
Spirit of Joy

Joy Harvie Maclaren in 1995 with  
Mohawk leader Ernie Benedict  
as Odawa elder Wilfred Pelletier  
(centre) looks on.



# A Broader View

**For Kay Best, building a stronger community takes many forms**

By Julie-Anne Cleyn • Photography by Jared Sych

**OF ALL THE MEMORABLE** moments in Kay Best's career in community work, having a front-row seat to the reintroduction of bison to Banff National Park was a definite highlight.

"It was so exciting and so interesting," says Best of the late-2016 meeting between the Eleanor Luxton Foundation and the Calgary Foundation to discuss bringing the historically important animals back to the park. "The Luxton Foundation representatives were so engaged when they talked about this project," adds Best, a Calgary Foundation board member who chairs the audit committee.

Knowing her finance work at the Foundation enables this kind of initiative is all the reward she needs.

A chartered accountant, Best has been supporting community-building endeavours for almost as long as she's been in Calgary. Born in Northern Ireland, she moved to Calgary with her husband in 1978 so he could find work as an architect. After returning to school, she started her accounting career in 1980, and soon became involved with the United Way of Calgary.

Over the course of her career, Best has held several positions with the Chartered Professional Accountants of Alberta and has been a member of the University of Calgary's audit committee. Today, in addition to her role with the

Calgary Foundation, she is a director of the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation and a board member at the Calgary Stampede Foundation. On top of all that, Best is also a corporate director with Canadian Natural Resources Ltd., Superior Plus Corp., AltaGas Ltd., Badger Daylighting and Wawanesa Mutual.

In her volunteer work, Best's motivation is improving the whole community rather than being focused on one particular cause. "When you do the kind of back-office work I do, you don't always have huge contact with the world outside, so being involved in a wide range of organizations gives me a broader view," she says.

It's a view that clearly makes her a great fit for the Calgary Foundation, where her talents found a home after she left a full-time job as interim CFO of Alberta Health Services.

While the bison project was especially rewarding, Best is also proud of the Calgary Foundation's work with the Nature Conservancy of Canada to preserve the Waldron grasslands in Alberta's southern foothills.

"It's always really been a favourite part of the province for me," she says. "I am so committed to supporting this special place and building community in Calgary and Alberta however I can, with whatever skills I can bring." ■





“

I'm so committed to supporting this special place, and building community in Calgary and Alberta however I can.

”





# A Sesquicentennial Connection

## Community Fund for Canada's 150th helps celebrate vibrant communities

By Elizabeth Chorney-Booth

**IT'S CANADA'S SESQUICENTENNIAL YEAR**, and that means people across the country are celebrating the 150th anniversary of Confederation. Creative, community-minded and just plain fun events and projects are happening from coast to coast.

The federal Department of Canadian Heritage and Canada's 191 community foundations have created the Community Fund for Canada's 150th to help boost these initiatives. Starting with

\$10 million from the federal government, the fund will total four times that amount thanks to private donations and matching by community foundations, including the Calgary Foundation. Thousands of small grants of up to \$15,000 are being given to projects that celebrate Canada and build a sense of belonging in our communities.

These local grant recipients are already hard at work on their programs:

I have the ability to tell people what they need to know about Down syndrome. I can tell them about what's happened to me in the past, and that I have hopes and dreams like everyone else.

*Paul Sawka, Down Syndrome Society awareness leader*



### Calgary Down Syndrome Society

INCLUSIVITY IS AN IMPORTANT PART of Canadian culture, and helping people with Down syndrome tell their stories in their own words is a powerful way to deepen their connection to our communities.

This is the thinking behind a new Canada's 150th program at the Calgary Down Syndrome Society in which awareness leaders—adults with Down syndrome—visit classrooms throughout the city. There,

they tell their stories, helping to develop understanding and empathy among school-age students.

"I have the ability to tell people what they need to know about Down syndrome," says Paul Sawka,

one of the awareness leaders. "I can tell them about what's happened to me in the past, and that I have hopes and dreams like everyone else."



The Thundering Nations Dance Troop, featured at the Diamond Music Fest during Black Diamond's Canada Day Celebration in 2016.



### Antyx Community Arts Society

THE ANTYX COMMUNITY ARTS SOCIETY has been developing the Forest Lawn Natural Park for some time, and received a Canada's 150th grant to engage youth to create artwork for the space at 10th Avenue and 43rd Street SE. This spring, 12 teenagers will explore the history of Treaty 7 with Indigenous elders. They'll then work with artists during the summer to bring what they've learned to life by painting six picnic tables and benches for the park. The creations will be unveiled at a celebration in the park on July 15.

### Town of Black Diamond

JUST 60 KILOMETRES SOUTH of downtown Calgary, Black Diamond is a community of about 2,500 people, rich with talented artists and musicians, beautiful scenery and a fascinating history. Through its BEING (Build, Engage, Inspire, Nurture, Grow) Canadian initiative, the town will hold a free two-day music festival, the Big 150, with the help of a Canada's 150th grant. Beginning on Canada Day, musicians, bands and youth performers will play the Big 150's main stage. Visitors can experience an artists' market, children's activities and an evening campfire area featuring cowboy poetry and stories with knowledge-keepers from the Eden Valley Reserve.

**3**  
**THINGS**  
for CANADA

You don't have to plan an event or apply for a grant to make your mark on Canada's 150th.

#### THE THREE THINGS FOR CANADA

campaign asks every Canadian to do three acts of service to help make our country a better place in 2017. Your "things" can be big or small, from sponsoring a refugee family to helping an elderly neighbour with yardwork.

**THE IDEA:** think about your community and help create a more engaged and welcoming society.

**#3ThingsforCanada**



Youth from the Boys and Girls Club work with community arts facilitator Kevin Jesuino, in plaid shirt, and artist mentor Drezus, seated, at a recent Indigenous youth camp.



In February  
of 2017,  
wild bison  
took their  
first steps  
in Banff  
National  
Park after  
a 20-year  
absence.





# Bridging the Cultural Gap

**The power of strengthening ties with Indigenous communities**

By Elizabeth Chorney-Booth

OVER THE 150 YEARS since Confederation, Canada's relationship with its Indigenous people has evolved. Today, there's a strong movement of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians coming together as partners in healing our communities. The following three initiatives are examples of the Calgary Foundation's commitment to building stronger relationships between all Canadians to bring about reconciliation and inclusivity.

>>



## Wildlife Conservation Society Canada: Bison Restoration and Indigenous Voices

**IT WAS ONLY 200 YEARS AGO** that up to 60 million bison roamed North America freely, providing a crucial resource and a cultural touchstone for Indigenous peoples. By the late 1880s, bison—commonly called buffalo—were all but extinct due to mass slaughter by European settlers. Some herds were saved and domesticated, and today bison are generally not classified as wild. Their near-extinction left a huge impact on the ecosystem in Alberta and the culture of our Indigenous communities.

"Culturally speaking, the buffalo is a keystone animal to the survival of our people. It gave sustenance for food, clothing and shelter, but it also figured largely into our belief system," says Leroy Little Bear, an Indigenous scholar, writer, educator and member of the Kainai (Blood) First Nation.

"The buffalo is very important to our culture and is a large part of our stories, beliefs and ceremonies. But our youth don't see it on a daily basis."

When the American Bison Society (an organization active from 1905 to 1935 that was relaunched by the Wildlife Conservation Society in 2005) met in Banff last September, it shifted the conversation away from the usual scientific issues. Indigenous leaders, elders and youth were invited to attend. The conference coincided with the second anniversary of the Buffalo Treaty, an agreement between First Nations in the United States and Canada that resolves to protect and restore bison herds to the wild.

Meetings brought together scientists and Indigenous leaders to speak about why restoring bison to their natural land is so deeply important. Knowing that so many people were

working toward a common goal was inspiring, Little Bear says.

"The buffalo is the portal through which everyone is going to come together and work on issues that the treaty and conference addresses,

which are conservation, education, culture, the environment and economics," he says. "The disappearance of the buffalo leaves a big gap in the culture of our people. Its return, culturally speaking, would fill that gap."

Above: Leroy Little Bear discusses the Buffalo Treaty at a meeting lodge behind the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies in Banff.



The buffalo is very important to our culture ... our stories, beliefs and ceremonies. But our youth don't see it on a daily basis.

*Leroy Little Bear*



“

... I've never done anything that's had this kind of impact across society. We have a real chance to right a wrong.”

*Harvey Locke, Luxton Foundation*

”



Above: Parks Canada staff members celebrate as the final crate of bison takes off for Banff National Park from the staging area at the Ya Ha Tinda Ranch.  
Main photo: Parks Canada resource conservation staffers Saundi Norris and Dillon Watt watch as bison take their first steps out of their shipping crate into Banff National Park.

## Eleanor Luxton Historical Foundation and Bison Belong

**ALBERTANS OF A CERTAIN AGE** may remember a time when a herd of bison lived in a paddock near the old airstrip in Banff. The paddock offered a rare chance to see the animals that used to roam wild through the area, but the herd was moved to Elk Island National Park in 1997 after studies showed it disrupted wildlife flow. Since then, the Eleanor Luxton Historical Foundation, a wholly owned entity of the Calgary Foundation, has been

working to bring bison back to Banff, a goal that was finally realized this past February.

That group of bison from the airstrip paddock descended from a herd initially brought to Banff in the early 1900s by Norman Luxton, who helped to build the world's largest herd of disease-free plains bison. Since the Banff herd was relocated to Elk Island, Luxton Foundation board member and conservationist Harvey Locke and other ecologists have been working to bring them back—though, this time, as free-roaming wildlife.

"Bison belong in Banff National Park," Locke says. "It's the only native wild species that isn't there in our oldest and most famous national park."

The Luxton Foundation helped initiate and support the Bison Belong program, and as a result, a group of

16 bison from the Elk Island herd are now in a fenced-in grassland area in Banff National Park. As the animals bond with the land, the fenced-in area will be expanded and eventually the fences will be taken down altogether.

The initiative is included in the Buffalo Treaty and has the support of Indigenous leaders. Locke says the project has strengthened bonds with Treaty 7 Indigenous communities.

"One of the great challenges that people face when they want to engage in reconciliation with First Nations is to find something to do together that's positive, and that's really been key to this," he says. "I've done a lot of environmental work in my time and I've never done anything that's had this kind of impact across society—and widespread support. We have a real chance to right a wrong."

>>



“

I think these rifts can be overcome if everyone knows the true stories.

”

Jeff Horvath



## Banff Centre Truth and Reconciliation Summit

**FOR JEFF HORVATH**, principal of the Tsuu T'ina Nation High School and a member of the Ojibways of Onegaming First Nation in north-western Ontario, the idea of truth and reconciliation is about healing. Horvath's mother is a survivor of Canada's residential school system, and the trauma of her experience affected her children. Horvath has since dedicated his life to educating Indigenous youth, and last October shared his story as a keynote speaker at the Truth and Reconciliation Summit at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity.

"Too often there are misconceptions and myths that are perpetuated in Canadian society, causing a pretty substantial rift between our communi-

ties," Horvath says. "I think these rifts can be overcome if everyone knows the true stories and the actual events that happened to our families."

Horvath's role in the conference, which received support from the Calgary Foundation, was to provide truth, but both he and organizers were also careful to focus on reconciliation, including the 94 calls to action laid out by the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Horvath was one of several speakers who, along with members of the Bow Valley community, discussed what they could do to heal the rifts.

"How do we engage with our Indigenous communities and make them full partners? How do we make

sure that our services, our education and our hospitals are all serving their needs just as much as the rest of the population?" says Brian Caillou, the Director of Indigenous Leadership Programming at Banff Centre. "We wanted people to leave having learned a bit more about the truth and feeling inspired to do something in their communities."

To help organizations continue on the same path, the Banff Centre will release a report on the actions stemming from the conference to advance the progress of reconciliation. ■

Top left: Jeff Horvath with his daughter and mother during his keynote presentation. Top right: Opening song by Eya-Hey Nakoda at Banff Centre's Truth and Reconciliation Summit. Above: Each participant's commitment to an action was written on a sticky note and attached to a wall for everyone to read.





# Learning Confidence

**The Rotary Tom Jackson Stay in School Program is building positive futures for Indigenous students**

By Paula Trotter • Photography by Jared Sych

**T**ALIA BASQUE IS ON HER WAY to becoming the first in her family to get a post-secondary education. The 13-year-old has a shy smile, but speaks with confidence: she wants to study law at Harvard and have a career helping others.

"I'm proud," says Talia's mom, Candace Basque. "She's

going to school to try and become something."

Both mother and daughter say Talia's motivation and determination stem from the mentorship she's receiving through the new Rotary Tom Jackson Stay in School Program. "I see them succeed and I want to be like them and help people like they do," Talia says of her two female mentors. >>



“

The mentors have been positive for Talia, and in my life as well. They've had a positive influence on the family as a whole.

”

*Candace Basque, Talia's mother*

### THE GOAL: GRADUATION

The Rotary Tom Jackson Stay in School program provides mentorship and \$1,500 a year each to Aboriginal children and teenagers as they progress through high school.

The financial support ensures students have access to tutoring and supplies, with any remaining amount at the end of Grade 12 going toward further training and education.

Children work with two mentors who help with homework and take them on field trips. Mentors identify when additional tutoring is required or if mental health needs are present.

Program co-chair and Rotary Club of Calgary member Catherine Brownlee says the initiative is desperately needed: the high school graduation rate among Aboriginal youth is just 34 per cent—startlingly lower than

the national average of over 80 per cent.

"Many of the kids don't even get to Grade 6," Brownlee says.

### RIPPLE EFFECT

The Rotary Tom Jackson Stay in School program is currently offered only in Calgary, but Brownlee hopes to take it across the country, with Rotary clubs in Fort McMurray, Red Deer and Lethbridge

already expressing interest.

Talia, who is in Grade 8 at Sir John Franklin School, entered the program two years ago and is one of 13 kids currently enrolled. Twenty-six community members have committed to long-term volunteer roles as mentors, for which Candace Basque is especially thankful.

"As a single mom with five kids, I can't divide one-on-one time between my kids and job," she says.





“

I believe education is one of the principal and most important things that a person at any age can do.

”

*Ryan Green, president of Masters Gallery*

"The mentors have been positive for Talia, and in my life as well. They've had a positive influence on the family as a whole."

#### EDUCATION FOR ALL

Ryan Green, president of Masters Gallery in Calgary, is a passionate champion of

education and community. "I believe education is one of the principal and most important things that a person at any age can do, particularly at a young age because it helps shape your world view; it helps shape who you will become," Green says.

"It's incredibly important, because it will open so many

doors in the future."

So he came aboard to support the program through his fundraising Art Talks, a series of presentations spearheaded by Norma Thurston. The Calgary Foundation is matching all donations made to the Rotary Tom Jackson Stay in School program through the Art Talks. ■

Masters Gallery president Ryan Green in the gallery. The artworks behind him, from left: *Torn Raiment*, by Canadian abstract painter Jack Bush; *Kispiox* and *Forest Interior*, both by Canadian icon Emily Carr.



## What's in a name?

Award-winning Canadian actor, recording artist and humanitarian Tom Jackson was eager to lend his name to a program that supports Indigenous youth in their pursuit of academic and personal growth.

Jackson dropped out of high school when he was a teenager and lived on the streets before he found success as an entertainer.

"If I had had a mentor who may have been focused and understood the kind of challenges a First Nations student might go through, there likely would have been another perspective that could have changed the direction of my path."



“

Inclusion is one of our major issues. The people here aren't used to being asked, so they're quite delighted to be consulted.

”

*D'Arcy Walsh, East Village resident*





# No Place Like Home

Programs are helping seniors maintain engaged, independent lives

By Elizabeth Chorney-Booth • Photography by Jared Sych

For older Calgarians, continuing to live independently in their own homes can contribute to an important sense of independence. Seniors aging in place often remain active, engaged participants in the larger community. The Calgary Foundation supports a number of initiatives that help older Calgarians stay at home as long as they can. Here's a look at three:

---

## 1

### Jack Long Foundation for Community Development: East Village Aging-In-Place Plan

**CALGARY'S EAST VILLAGE** is teeming with exciting new businesses, modern condo buildings and a whole lot of construction. Less noticeable are the buildings that were in the neighbourhood before redevelopment began: older concrete highrises like Murdoch Manor and the George C. King Tower. These affordable housing projects are home to hundreds of low-income seniors. As they watch their neighbourhood change, many are concerned about where they'll end up once they require supported living facilities.

"The people here worry," says D'Arcy Walsh, who has lived in the King Tower for six years.

"As they start to get older and their mental or physical health deteriorates, they

don't know where to go from here."

With support from the Calgary Foundation, representatives from the Jack Long Foundation are working with seniors in the East Village to develop a supported care solution that can act as a bridge for people who are not yet ready for a nursing home, but can no longer live independently. A similar initiative recently took place in Inglewood.

The East Village seniors have identified maintaining safety as their first priority, as well as a sense of community and inclusivity, with friends and familiar surroundings in the neighbourhood they call home.

"What happens when there's 11,000 people here and the vast majority are young?" Walsh says. "How are they going to get along with low-income people who are often stereotyped? Inclusion is one of our major issues. The people here aren't used to being asked, so they're quite delighted to be consulted."



2

## Calgary Meals on Wheels: Full Client Support Program

**COUNTLESS SENIORS** are able to stay in their own homes thanks in part to Calgary Meals on Wheels.

Being able to rely on two healthy hand-delivered meals a day kept Dianne Morrison's widowed father in his own

home for six years longer than he would have been able to otherwise.

"He truly could not have lived very long on his own without it," Morrison says of her father, who recently transferred into an independent living facility.

"I knew that he had food coming and there was always someone checking on him to make sure he was okay."



Part of what makes Meals on Wheels work for seniors like Morrison's dad is that the service is affordable: clients are charged on a scale based on net income, with a day's meals costing as little as \$4.25. But for some, even that cost is too much, which is why, with funding from the Calgary Foundation, Calgary Meals on Wheels is launching the Full Client Support Program,





3

offering free service to clients with low incomes or high medical costs.

Clients who would not otherwise be able to afford and prepare their own nutritious food—because of cost as well as things like decreased mobility, cognitive issues or the loss of a spouse or caregiver—will have their fees waived so they can safely stay in their own homes.

"We're looking at multiple factors when considering if someone needs full financial support," says Kim Jeffery, a dietitian and client services manager at Calgary Meals on Wheels. "We can really improve and maintain their independence in their homes, and reduce a lot of stress both on them and their families."

## University of Calgary Garden Lofts

### FAMILIES WITH AGING RELATIVES

often want to keep their loved ones close by, but it can be costly to create a secondary suite with the needed accessibility features. That's why John Brown, a professor and the Associate Dean (Research) of Environmental Design Practice at the University of Calgary, is working on an alternative that could allow seniors to live literally in their families' backyards.

Brown and his team have developed modular units they call Garden Lofts, designed to set down in a typical backyard and be occupied by elderly or frail rela-

Facing page: Top left, Hideko Koizumi prepares food in the Calgary Meals on Wheels kitchen. Top right, Stephanie Ralph delivers a meal to client Ron Nastiuk. This page: U of C professor John Brown with a Garden Lofts prototype—a portable living unit designed to allow seniors to stay close to family.

“

We're developing these homes almost as a kind of medical device. They'll have a lot of capacity to provide support for people as they grow older.

”

*University of Calgary  
professor John Brown*

tives. The 440-square-foot residences will be leased, so families will pay for them only while they're needed.

"It's a prefabricated portable living unit that's placed and leased to residents for the period of time that they require supported living," Brown says. "When they're finished with it, it's returned and goes back into the pool to be redeployed."

Through the Faculty of Environmental Design, Brown is currently building a working prototype of his Garden Loft with funding help from the Calgary Foundation. Plans call for the units to be tested with real-life residents in the near future.

The modular lofts can be fitted easily with whatever medical equipment the resident needs, a feature Brown developed in collaboration with the O'Brien Institute of Public Health at the U of C's Cumming School of Medicine. It's a potential game-changer for seniors who want to retain a home of their own for as long as possible.

"We're developing these homes almost as a kind of medical device," Brown says. "They'll have a lot of capacity to provide support for people as they grow older." ■



# Enterprising and





# Engaged

## **Entrepreneurial spirit fuels the success of these social programs**

Story and photography by Jennifer Friesen

Seeing people get their lives on track and headed for success is tremendously rewarding for the agencies dedicated to helping them. Here are two creative and entrepreneurial organizations that, through commercial strategies, innovation, education and collaboration, help people facing challenges build strength in the face of adversity.





“  
At the end of my days, I will reflect on all of the students  
that we've been able to help together.”

*Tom Loszchuk, Calgary Drop-In Centre  
woodshop manager*



## The Calgary Drop-In & Rehab Centre's WoodWorks woodshop

Top left, journeyman upholsterer Dwight Knudsen is an instructor at the Drop-In Centre woodshop.

Top right, assistant upholsterer Adriana Rubio. Bottom left, the facility includes a finishing area where stain and lacquer are applied.

Bottom right and previous pages, wood-turning specialist Dale Keith creates cutting boards, trophies and other items from wood scraps.

Below, Nathan Reddy, left, and Tom Loszchuk at WoodWorks.

**NATHAN REDDY DISTINCTLY RE-MEMBERS** how it all started. He was clamouring after his master carpenter grandfather as he set to building a new fence. At age four, Reddy wasn't able to help as much as he wanted, but his grandfather patiently explained the difference between screwdrivers and let him pound nails into Styrofoam.

"That was really special to me," Reddy says. "He inspired me to get into this kind of work, so I tried to continue on the family tradition."

And he did, thanks in part to the Calgary Drop-In & Rehab Centre's WoodWorks woodshop.

The Drop-In Centre founded WoodWorks in 2000. The 10,000-square-foot facility is equipped with a central

machine shop, a finishing shop, an upholstery shop, three work bays and state-of-the-art equipment. The mission: to give at-risk youth and Drop-In Centre clients the opportunity to apprentice in the cabinetmaking trade.

In high school, Reddy struggled with his classwork. He joined WoodWorks after Grade 11, using Alberta Education's Registered Apprenticeship Program to earn credits toward his diploma. Now 23, Reddy is a SAIT graduate and a Red Seal journeyman cabinetmaker.

From massive boardroom tables to bars, desks and benches, the woodshop's finished products can be found across Calgary.

"It amazes the customers, and all

the people who come into the circle of what we do," says Tom Loszchuk, the woodshop manager for almost nine years. "Homelessness can happen to anybody, so we all have to recognize that and help each other reach our full potential. At the end of my days, I will reflect on all of the students that we've been able to help together."

WoodWorks' recent projects have included doing all the millwork in the Calgary Foundation's new offices at the Kahanoff Centre, along with contracts from the Blue Devil Golf Course and Big T's BBQ & Smokehouse. All proceeds go back to the Drop-In Centre. The Calgary Foundation also supports the WoodWorks program with donations from its Funds.

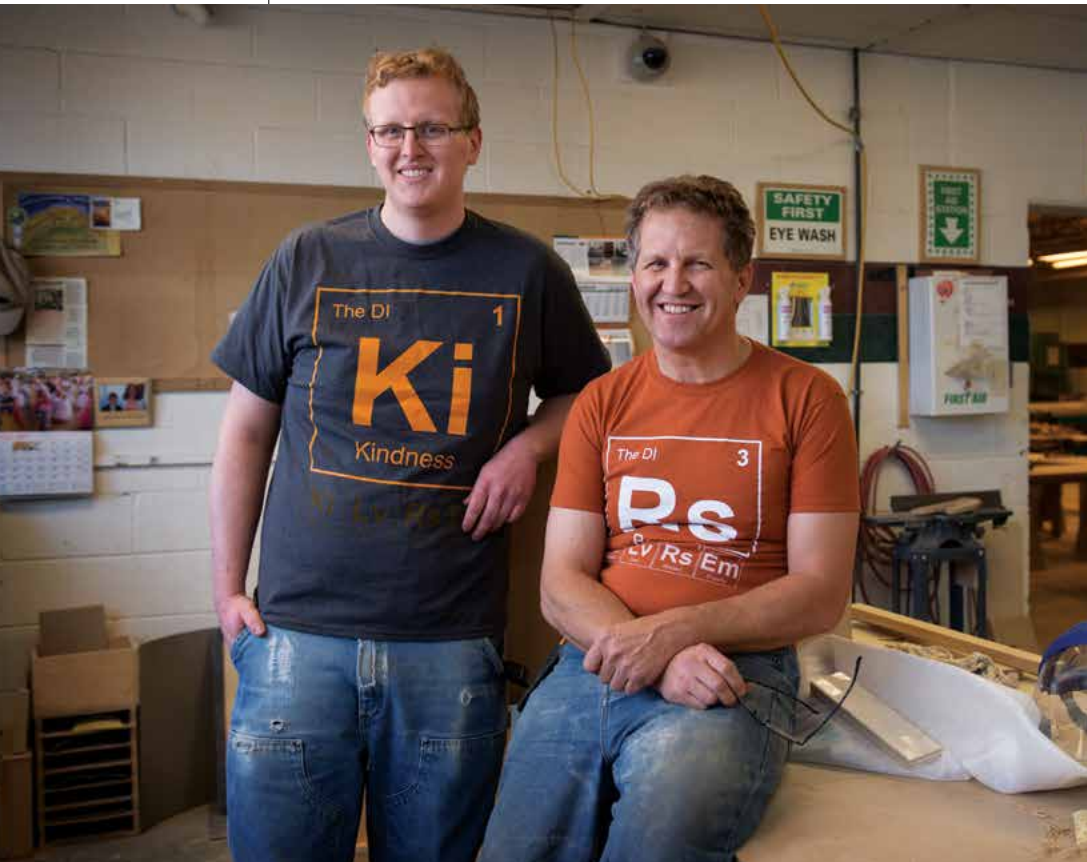
"It makes me feel good to see the finished products used in Calgary," Reddy says. "Not only because I learned valuable skillsets, but also because I was helping to promote a positive identity for the Drop-In Centre."

Loszchuk says giving students the opportunity to see their work put to use is a key reason for the success of WoodWorks' social enterprise model.

"The Drop-In Centre had that foresight," Loszchuk says. "I didn't see it at first. I said, 'What is a shelter doing with a cabinet shop?' But they recognized cabinetmaking and woodworking as a fantastic vehicle to help people who are down and out. It's so invigorating."

Of the 100 students who have been through the program, more than 90 per cent have succeeded in the field, Loszchuk says. "I often liken it to throwing a fish back into the water. They're struggling, flopping around, but you throw them in the water—into the right environment for them—and whoosh, off they go."

Nearly all WoodWorks' 2016 contracts were repeat business, Loszchuk says, adding that customers often ask about how the students are doing.







“

Being a mom at a young age can be a really daunting journey.... Providing a safe and loving environment takes away one toxic stress in their life.”

Patricia Glenn, executive director,  
Highbanks Society

”



Top left, Jessica Brady came to Highbanks when she discovered she was pregnant. Her daughter is now four.

Top right, Highbanks operations manager Catherine Laing plays with a client's daughter.

Bottom left, Varia Pylypchuk and her son, Stephan, in their apartment at Highbanks. Varia spends her days at high school while Stephan is in daycare.

Bottom right, visiting Highbanks in early March, Jessica Brady's daughter watches people come and go.

## Highbanks Society

**MAINTAINING A HIGH GRADE POINT AVERAGE** is hard enough for any student—but doing so while raising an infant is another struggle entirely.

When Highbanks Society founder Bette Mitchell was working as a parent educator 16 years ago, she spent day after day meeting with young mothers. Facing the unexpected reality of being parents while still teens themselves, many lived in cramped basements or crowded apartments. Often, their education fell by the wayside.

"One day Bette just got completely frustrated and said, 'We can't be doing this anymore,'" says Patricia Glenn, executive director of the Highbanks Society.

Mitchell wanted to offer the young women a safe place to live, a suppor-

tive community and a way to continue their education.

That's when she saw that the 50-year-old Bowview Apartments building in West Hillhurst was for sale. With apartments upstairs and two retail businesses including the popular Dairy Lane Cafe on the ground floor, the building was in an ideal location near the facilities young mothers were likely to need.

She jumped into fundraising, and in December of 2002 the Highbanks Society bought the building. After a brief experiment with running the cafe itself, the society decided in 2004 to rent out the two commercial spaces to Dairy Lane and the Velvet Style salon. The rental revenue provides the organization with 20 per cent of its annual income.

"That model, and innovation with social enterprise, have had a big impact for us," Glenn says. "One of the biggest reasons Highbanks can offer what it does is because we're open to partnerships."

The Highbanks program, which has received support from the Calgary Foundation, has to date helped 70 young mothers age 16 to 24 complete their education and plan careers. Clients also learn parenting and life skills including cooking and nutrition, and trauma therapy is available to them. The building has five furnished two-bedroom apartments, a rooftop community garden, a playroom and a gathering space.

"Being a mom at a young age can be a really daunting journey," Glenn says. "Research has shown that it can reduce access to education and increase the tendency to live in poverty. So providing a safe and loving environment takes away one toxic stress in their life, and it's removing it from the child's life as well."

Jessica Brady came to Highbanks four years ago. She was 22 and had just been accepted into the journalism program at Mount Royal University when she found out she was pregnant. She said she knew she would be "100 per cent alone" in raising her daughter, and she was being told she would have to step away from her education.

"But my attitude was: 'No,'" she says. "If I'm going to bring a child into this world, then I need to show her that you should do whatever it takes to accomplish your goals. So I'm going to go to school and get my education and do what I need to in order to accomplish those goals for both of us."

Today, Brady is living independently with her four-year-old daughter.

Clients living at Highbanks must be enrolled in high school or post-secondary, with a minimum 80 per cent attendance rate. ■

## Gaining Perspective

### Tim Fox brings invaluable insight to community discussions

By Julia Williams • Photography by Jared Sych

**Each volunteer at the Calgary Foundation brings a distinct—and essential—perspective on the city. Tim Fox has deep knowledge about the needs of Indigenous people and communities, and he's proud to share that knowledge with fellow volunteers when considering funding requests.**

When Tim Fox moved to Calgary in the early 2000s, he was overcome with culture shock. Fox, who grew up on the Kainai First Nation reserve south of Lethbridge, found himself alone for the first time. "I think my spirit was still back home," he says.

Unsure where to turn, Fox picked up a phone book and looked for the word "Aboriginal." Soon, he was on a bus to the Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth, an agency that connected him with the Youth Employment Centre. Fox got a job, enrolled at Mount Royal University and began building relationships within his new community.

Now 34, Fox is the manager of Indigenous initiatives at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary and a member of the Education & Lifelong Learning Committee at the Calgary

Foundation. He's also involved with several community initiatives related to intergenerational trauma, a subject he says has helped him understand some of his own life experiences.

"When you're a young person dealing with challenges tied to your history, you don't always realize where they're coming from," Fox says.

Fox brings this knowledge to the Calgary Foundation when considering Indigenous-specific initiatives. He says the proposals his committee receives show there's a growing awareness and desire to help resolve the ongoing effects of trauma. "It makes me really excited," Fox says.

Through the Calgary Foundation, he's broadening his awareness of the range of people who understand historical trauma's impact. "I'm blown away when we go on site tours and site visits," he says.

The father of a six-year-old daughter and a stepson, Fox says intergenerational connections are always on his mind—as is the importance of strong community. "I'm aware that the adult my daughter is going to be isn't just a result of me, it's everyone who has an influence in her life," he says. ■





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When you're a young person dealing with challenges tied to your history, you don't always realize where they're coming from.

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From little-known landmarks along the Elbow River to inside looks at youth culture, urban art, history and more, Jane's Walks have offered 10 years of unique opportunities to bring communities together.

engagement associate at the Calgary Foundation, who coordinates the annual event. A Jane's Walk is a mobile conversation in which leaders and participants connect and share knowledge and passion for their communities.

Named for the late urbanist Jane Jacobs, who championed a community-based approach to city-building, Jane's Walks are free, citizen-led tours that take place in cities around the world on the first full weekend of May. The phenomenon began in Toronto in 2007 and marks a decade in Calgary this year.

Jane's Walk in Calgary has experienced a steady and gratifying growth, from six walks in 2008 to 68 in 2016.

Jane's Walk is as much about people as it is about places. And while some walks include explorations of the past, others focus on the present and future.

"I think because it's so defined by the people who run these walks, it stays relevant," Black says, when she contemplates the festival's endurance. And it's become a self-sustaining phenomenon. "It's really quite organic, grassroots and flexible."

To mark the 10-year anniversary of Jane's Walk in Calgary this May, the Foundation is encouraging communities and volunteers to "co-create" the event. Black anticipates what she calls "a few surprises along the way" as she and the hundreds of volunteers who have built Jane's Walk define the celebration.

"The Calgary Foundation is very much about being responsive to our community. We're rooted in the people and the organizations here and we want to stay current. Jane's Walk is that way, too." ■

**#janeswalkyyc**

## A Walk to Remember

**Jane's Walk celebrates 10-year milestone**

By Julie-Anne Cleyn

**A FEW YEARS AGO**, a group of teenage girls in Highland Park took a group of people for a walk to the community association's basketball court to talk about women and sports. Then they moved to a local beauty salon to discuss young women's struggles with body image.

In another community, immigrant youth led a group to the local school and playground to talk about building a sense of belonging in their neighbourhood

through participation in sports.

And in another part of the city, a young woman in her 20s and her mother realized they didn't know a lot of their neighbours anymore. The two had lived in the same place for 25 years, but it had changed with an influx of new people. So they decided to bring a group together and explore the neighbourhood.

Each of these is a perfect example of a Jane's Walk, says Julie Black, citizen



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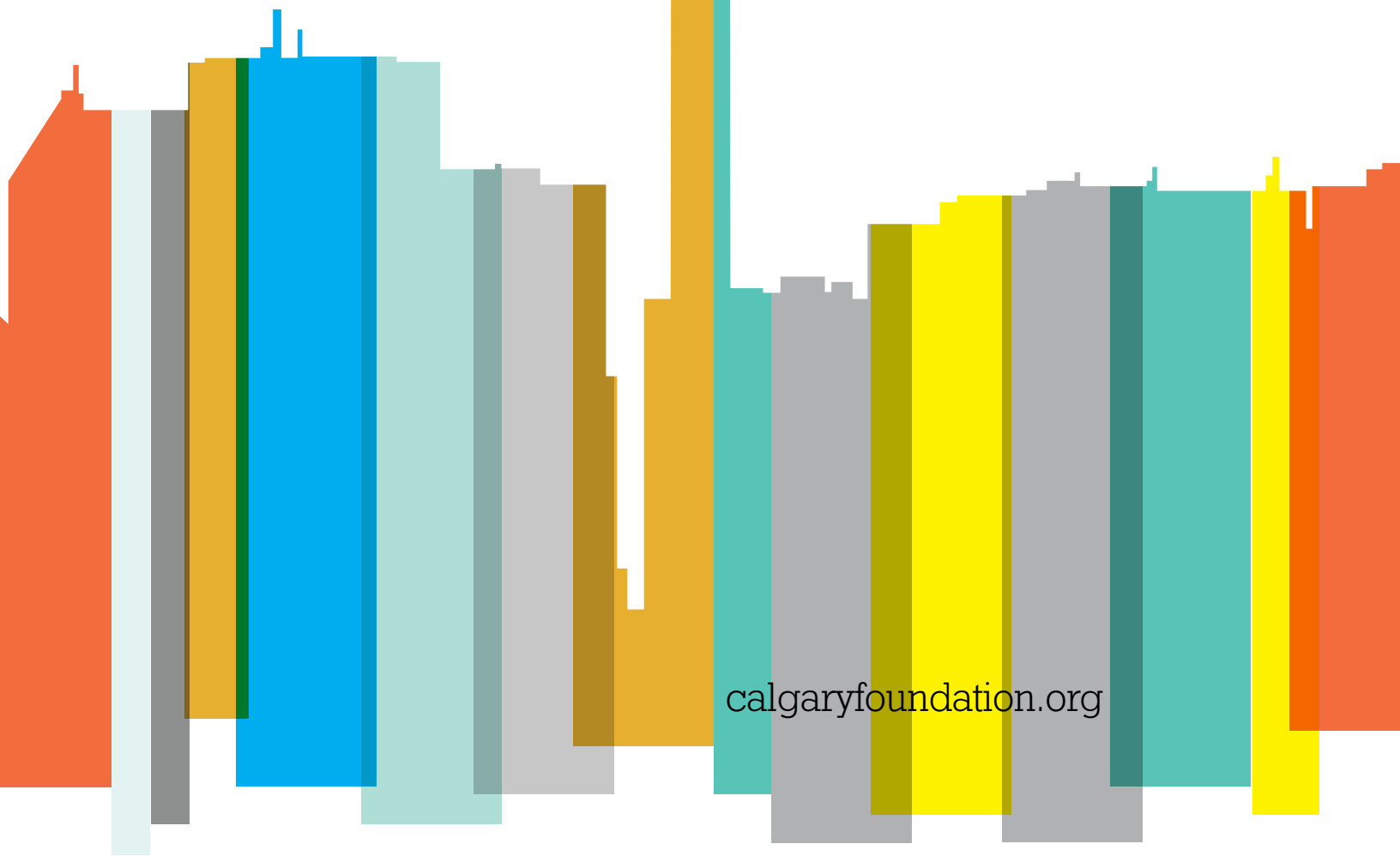
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