



Still together...



THE HILLHURST SUNNYSIDE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION REPORT TO COMMUNITY 2021



A Message from the Board & Executive Director

Report to Community 2021

Dear Hillhurst–Sunnyside Residents,

On behalf of HSCA, we are pleased to present you with the 2021 Report to Community. Here we will highlight a few stories of community connection, inclusion, adaptability and resilience amongst the challenges of an ongoing pandemic. Throughout the ups and downs of 2021, HSCA continues its focus on preserving and enhancing the quality of life for residents of Hillhurst–Sunnyside.

Connection

Throughout the year, we have been challenged to find new ways to support community members in connecting and we are happy to share some of the successes we've had. After being closed for the 2020 season, the Bowview Outdoor Swimming Pool reopened to offer lessons and recreational swimming. The pool operated with great success under a new booking system and within the COVID-19 guidelines. In addition to providing a place for connection at the pool, we piloted events with YYC Food Trucks, resumed some in-person Neighbour Night programming and finished the year with outdoor events, thanks to the Warm Up to Winter grant from the Parks Foundation Calgary.

Inclusion

In an effort to create more gender equity and recognize the gender identities of our team, HSCA began including gender pronouns in our email signatures, and created buttons with gender pronouns that are available to all staff and volunteers to wear. In May, we shared content in reflection and celebration of Asian Heritage Month; this included blog posts and social media content created by staff and residents highlighting the diversity and stories that exist within our own community.

Adaptability

The COVID-19 pandemic has put our adaptability to the test time and time again. Our staff, volunteers and the residents of Hillhurst Sunnyside have continued to demonstrate their ability to adapt to the ever-changing situation. Our Out of School Care (OOSC) program had to quickly adapt to provide full-day programming and support children in completing their schoolwork when school went online. Our childcare teams have had to close and re-open cohorts and implement new and changing guidelines, all while continuing to provide a high level of engaging care for the children in our programs. HSCA's Facility Services team has been ready to pivot at a moment's notice; supporting our programs and services to operate smoothly and safely.

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Resilience and Looking Ahead

If nothing else, this year has been a lesson in resilience. We made it through an incredibly unpredictable 2020 feeling, at times, like we barely survived. Through the work of our amazing team of staff, volunteers and board members, we started taking some early steps to recovery in 2021. Many programs and services that were on hold have been brought back, often with significant changes. It can still feel like we are barely surviving at times, but our ability to work together and efficiently implement the best possible response is getting better all the time. As we look to the year ahead, we have three strategic priorities: Connecting our Community, Supporting Community Members, and Financial and Succession Planning.

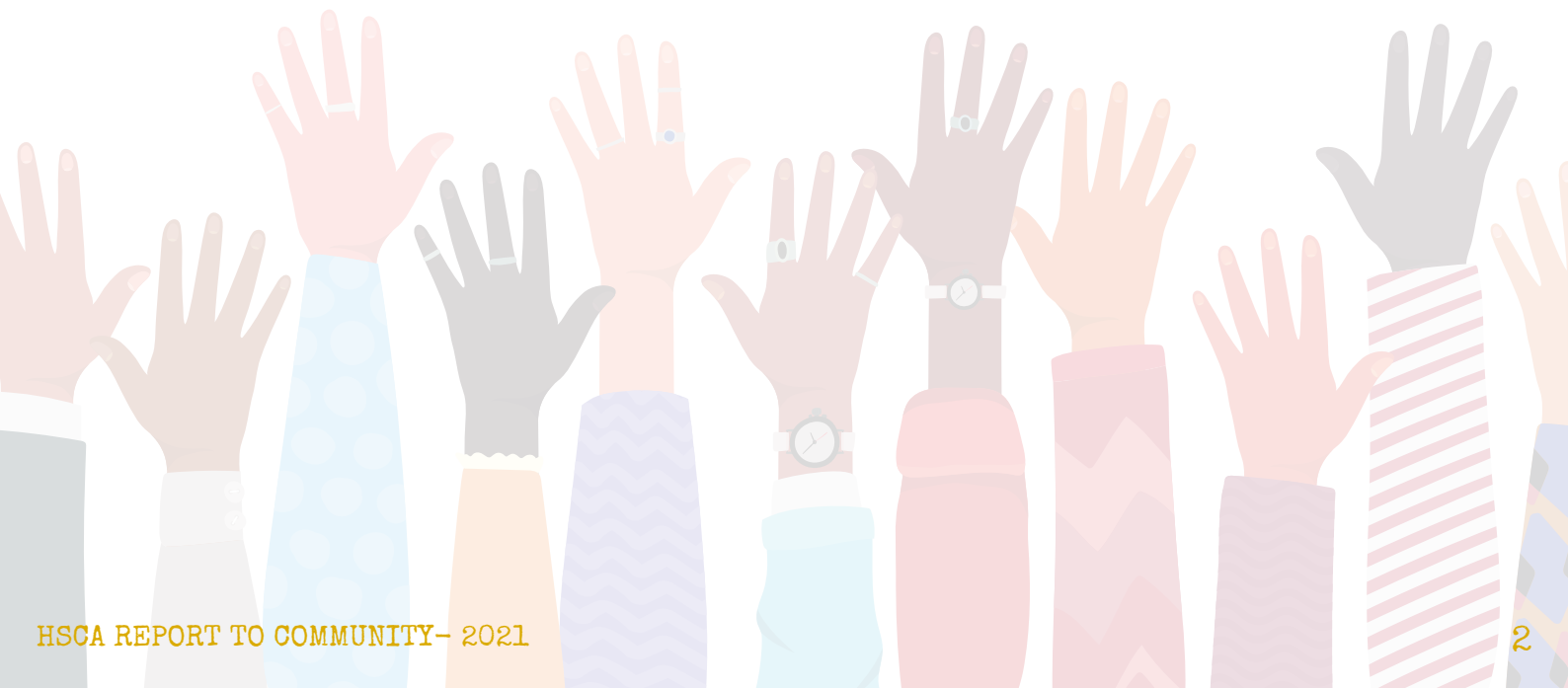
Will you join us in building community in 2022?

If you would like to become one of our stellar volunteers, or to join our Board of Directors and help make positive impacts to your family, friends, and neighbours, you can do so by visiting hsc.ca/volunteer.

Sincerely,

Laila Adam
Chair, HSCA Board of Directors

Kate Stenson
Executive Director



PROGRAMS WE RAN IN 2021

CHILDCARE DAYCARE, OUT-OF-SCHOOL CARE (OOSC), SUN FUN

- Daycare averaged 65 kids per month, 60 in September.
- OOSC started the year with 15 children, ended with 35.
- OOSC offered online learning for 2 weeks in the spring and held two Town Hall meetings in Fall 2021 to engage families in determining COVID-19 guidelines.



A MIX OF ONLINE AND IN-PERSON PROGRAMMING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



- 54 unique individuals took part in Chair Yoga for a total attendance of 1,456
- The Monday Connections and Caregiver Connections support groups took place online, as did several of the HSCA Neighbour Nights
- HSCA hosted its first "Repair Café", and "Support a Family for Christmas" initiative.

SUSTAINABLE FOOD PROGRAMMING

- 40 - 50 families benefited from HSCA's Sustainable Food Program each week.
- Fresh Food Basket provides free food and monthly \$10 vouchers to Fresh Routes, a mobile affordable grocery store which stops at HSCA each Monday.
- Market Greens is a partnership with CFCC to provide Fresh Routes vouchers for individuals experiencing or at risk for diet-related illness.



PROGRAMS WE RAN IN 2021

FARMERS MARKET & FLEA MARKET

- Farmers market averaged 700 people per week, with 250 weekly visitors during the winter.
- Both the Farmers Market and Flea Market showed incredible resilience despite challenging and ever-changing COVID-19 restrictions.



RENTALS, RECREATION, AND BOWVIEW POOL FACILITIES



- 2021 saw HSCA debut its Tennis Membership system.
- Gym rentals slowly began reopening June 12, to hosting large indoor markets October 11 and 18.
- Spring 2021 HSCA received an Energizing Spaces grant to replace three old refrigerator/freezer units with new commercial reach-in freezers. The Freezers were delivered and installed in October.

Warm up to Winter



SPECIAL EVENTS

This winter we received a Warm Up to Winter Grant from the City of Calgary and Parks Foundation Calgary. The Sunnyside Brightening Committee used the grant to purchase chairs, firepits, a community notice board and build a second rink in New Edinborough Park. They have hosted several events this winter in conjunction with this grant including outdoor games, broomball, skating and fireside gatherings.

HSCA also hosted five pop-up food truck events in 2021 featuring YYC Food Trucks



Virtually Together

NEIGHBOUR NIGHTS

One incredible thing HSCA observed during the year 2021 was the willingness of community residents to stick together during long stretches of quarantine, stay-at-home recommendations, and physical distancing. Despite the wealth of online content available these days, residents of Hillhurst-Sunnyside chose to participate locally, even when physical gatherings weren't possible.

A great example of this was the success of Virtual Neighbour Nights, hosted by our Community Connections programmer Shaye Radford.



Residents joined monthly cooking classes, film viewing nights, Discord group chats, and a variety of crafts/activities like making cards, bath salt jars, intentional bracelets, coffee scrub, and hair gel, rock painting, weaving, planting seedlings, and lots more!

While gathering restrictions in the winter kept Neighbour Nights primarily online, Shaye and company also made the most of the summer with some outdoor activities like a food truck feast, bath bomb making, Halloween mask making, nature walks, foraging lemonade supplies, and just being together safely outdoors!

Special thanks to Abir and Sima from Make Mindfully for their help in running most of these events! Many participants in Neighbour Night live alone, and for some this was their only form of social connection during COVID-19.



Virtually Together

CHAIR YOGA



Initially started as a volunteer effort by Sharon Cavanagh in 2015, participation in the HSCA Chair Yoga program has grown steadily over the years, reaching 57 participants by the end of February 2020, when all in-person programming was suspended due to COVID-19.

Throughout May and June of 2020, Sharon created virtual classes on YouTube, so that participants could get the benefit of the exercise until returning to the centre. These classes were well received, though technological barriers to access do exist for some seniors.

When it became apparent that COVID-19 was not going away anytime soon, Sharon and Debbie Olson (Seniors' Connections Coordinator) brought the Chair Yoga classes onto the online conferencing platform Zoom, and the online Chair Yoga classes have now expanded to two classes per week as of January 2021. The meeting rooms are open 30 minutes before and after the class so that participants can connect with Debbie and each other--a feature of in-person programming that many participants had been missing.

While virtual programming has its limitations, and access to technology remains a barrier for some, Online Chair Yoga has been so successful that a return to in-person programming will feature a hybrid model, allowing participants to continue from home if they prefer. This solves the issue of transportation for many seniors, especially during winter-driving months.

The program is fantastic! It's having a positive impact on my physical health and mobility as well as building a community of like-minded folks who help to hold me accountable. Sharon is awesome! thanks so much for hosting this valuable program.

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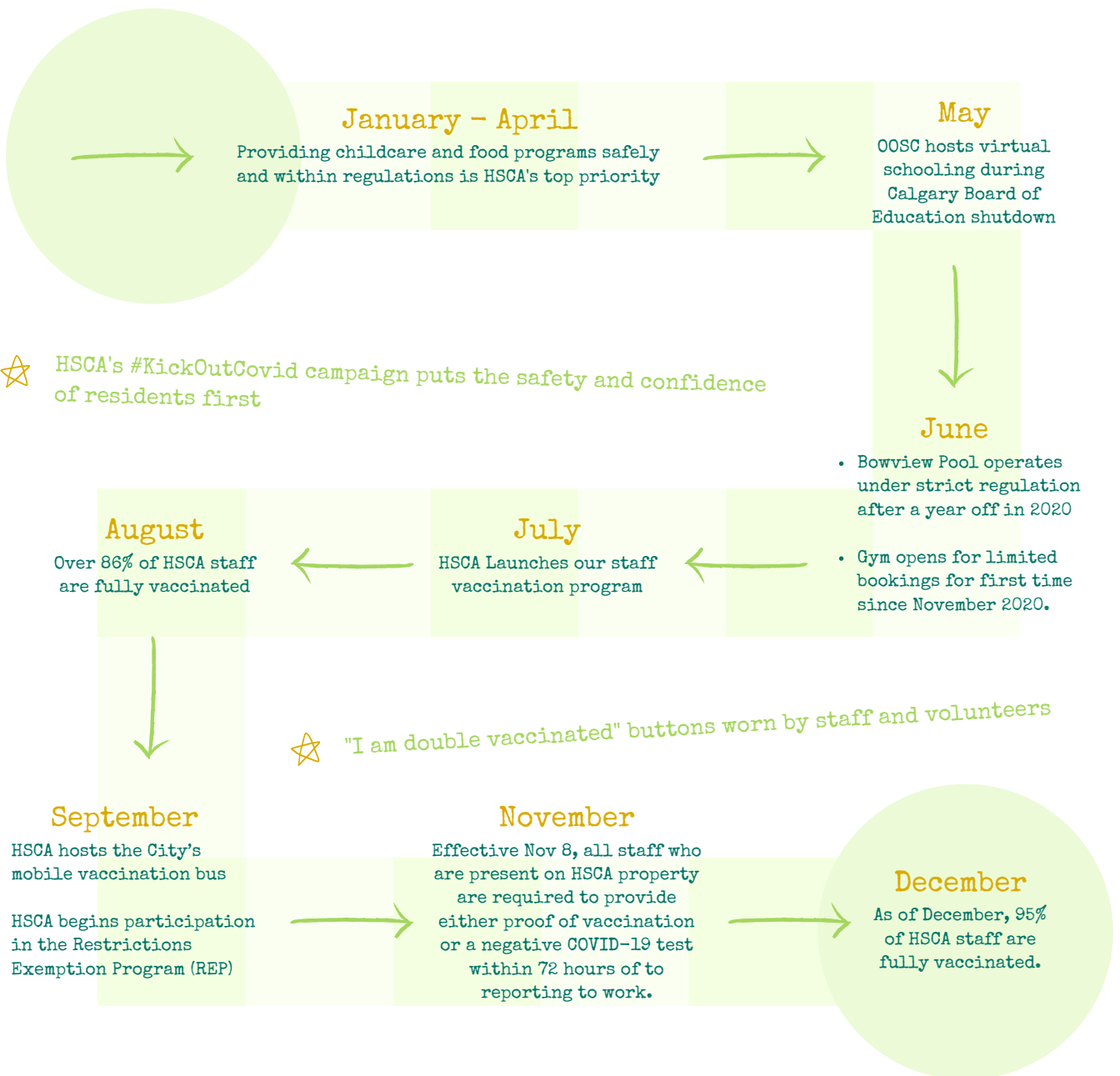
The class is very enjoyable and rewarding in that I feel stronger and more focused in my daily life. Certainly appreciate our wonderful instructor, Sharon. She makes the class interesting by switching things up!!

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I very much enjoy the sessions... I look forward to meeting everyone in person but for now the zoom sessions are the best. I also appreciate Debbie's enthusiasm.

COVID-19: AN ONGOING CHALLENGE

2021 MILESTONES



OTHER IMPACTS

- Confirmed cases in childcare lead to room closures during the year
- Rentals and events halted due to cancellations and restrictions
- Limited staff hours pose an ongoing challenge throughout 2021
- Program participation and attendance suffer, online programming leaves some residents feeling isolated.

NEW INITIATIVES

LAND BLESSING AT HSCA FARMERS MARKET

In May 2021, we welcomed the outdoor season with a land blessing at HSCA. As farmers and food producers, we are deeply connected to the Land. Our relationship to the Land supports our families and communities. We acknowledge and honour those who have been and continue to bestow these Lands since time immemorial. The intention of this blessing is to hold space and build bridges with our Indigenous community members; this is the first of many upcoming opportunities to listen, to share, and to foster new connections.

Due to the provincial restrictions on gatherings, the Blessing was available for community to attend virtually via Zoom and Instagram live. The Blessing began with a smudge, then Elder Earnest Poundmaker gave thanks to the land and the peoples whose traditional territories on which we stand:

These Lands hold the histories of the Blackfoot confederacy: Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, as well as the Îyâxe Nakoda Nations; the Bearspaw, Chiniki and Wesley First Nations, and the Tsuut'ina Nation families and Ancestors, and the Métis community, specifically the Métis Nation Region Three.

Elder Poundmaker then offered a prayer in Cree language inviting others to participate in prayer however they choose to pray.

HSCA RECOGNIZES THAT STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND KNOWLEDGE HOLDERS IS ESSENTIAL TO BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND FOOD SYSTEMS.



Photo courtesy of @alphahousecalgary

NEW INITIATIVES

RESIDENT-LED INITIATIVES HANDBOOK



Developed in the summer of 2021, this handbook represents an ever-evolving document based on commonly asked questions from the community. Because Hillhurst and Sunnyside are such resilient, friendly, hyper-engaged communities, we know that there is a lot of energy to improve the quality of life of our neighbourhoods. The Resident-Led Initiatives Handbook compiles resources such as grants, permits, sponsorship, tax information and much more into one convenient document, empowering residents to pioneer the changes they would like to see in their community. [View the entire booklet at https://www.hsca.ca/resident-led](https://www.hsca.ca/resident-led)



HSCA REPAIR

CAFÉ

HSCA hosted our first Repair Café during the month of November. Thanks to the skills and efforts of our wonderful volunteer fixers, a huge assortment of household items such as furniture, electronics and small appliances were repaired and diverted from the landfill. Special thanks to the Arusha Centre for supporting the event with a Take Action Grant, Ridley's Cycle for volunteering tech time to complete bike repairs, and to Jan Ooi for spearheading the whole initiative!



SUPPORT A FAMILY FOR THE HOLIDAYS

This initiative matched 20 supporters with families in need to provide personalized gifts for 65 people, all delivered by December 24th. Volunteers described the experience as heartwarming and unforgettable, with many tears of joy being shed. A telling quote from one of the recipients was "You have no idea what you've done for us."



NEW INITIATIVES

CLIMATE ACTION TOOLKIT



This toolkit, produced by [Open Streets Events](#), in collaboration with the Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association (HSCA), is designed to support Albertan Community Associations to increase their environmental sustainability work, with a particular focus on the Calgary area. This will help our residents to take grassroots community action on climate change issues, in a contextually relevant and meaningful way. [Read the entire document here: hsc.ca/climate-action](https://hsc.ca/climate-action)



PLACEMAKING AND URBAN VITALITY

TWO NEW PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEES

Sunnyside Brightening Committee

The Sunnyside Brightening Committee (SBC) is an active group of neighbours seeking to "brighten" Sunnyside via recreational, artistic and environmental improvements. Originally established to focus on aesthetic aspects of flood mitigation projects, their scope has expanded to include essentially all recreational, artistic and environmental opportunities in Sunnyside.

Hillhurst Placemaking Committee (Team Red)

In Hillhurst, a group of residents on "Team Red" got together to implement the Warm Up to Winter Grant pop-up in West Gladstone Park. This group of neighbours activated the park with ambient lighting, seating and firepits. Hosting a holiday pop up with elves, storytelling and carolling as well as a recent fireside gathering with food trucks and outdoor games brought the neighbourhood together safely outdoors this winter. This park has been embraced by the community and groups can often be seen enjoying the space outside of these events. Vitality in this area has improved increasing the safety and livability of the area. The Hillhurst Placemaking Committee (affectionately known as "Team Red") is a network of fun, creative and engaged Hillhurstians who want to continue to beautify and enhance this area of the community.



THE HSCA TEAM

Board of Directors

Andrew Rogan – Director at Large
Bekah Callaghan – Secretary
David Fanstone – Treasurer
Joanne Grower – Director at Large
Kathleen Kenny – Director at Large
Kate Stenson – Executive Director
Laila Adam – Chair
Mary Marson-Troicuk – Vice-Chair
Miranda Johnson – Director at Large
Ryan Morstad – Director at Large
Sandra Walker – Personnel Committee Chair

2021 Funders

Calgary Foundation
Calgary Heritage Authority
Calgary Outdoor Swimming Pool Association
City of Calgary
Community Food Centres Canada
Family and Community Support Services
Federation of Calgary Communities
Government of Alberta
Government of Canada
Parks Foundation Calgary
Private Donors

STAFF TRIBUTE

A Letter from Lisa Chong

Lisa was with HSCA for 7 years, most recently as the Community Planning & Engagement Coordinator.

Hillhurst-Sunnyside-Kensington has been known as an eclectic, trendy neighbourhood for a long time. I have always loved the upbeat vibe, the street activity, and the mix of century-old and new buildings in the neighbourhood. When I took my first urban studies course on my first day of class in university, I was introduced to Jane Jacobs, a writer and champion for communities. I knew I wanted to be a city planner. It took several years, a return to school, and a lot of job rejections.

When the opportunity came up and I sent my application to MyDreamJobs@hsca.ca, it was meant to be. I want to thank HSCA for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be a part of your evolving story: from new apartments to laneway homes and public realm and park improvements – making the community more vibrant, one block at a time. Along the way, I've met mentors and strong women who helped shaped this vision of a welcoming community.

All things come full circle: I've organized and led several walking tours in honour of Jane, sharing the community's story. And we've continued the HSCA's tradition of collaboration and calling people in to discussions, celebrating the value of local knowledge, and using your aspirations to energize meaningful actions and engagement. I am honoured to have served at HSCA, a place that has welcomed thousands of Calgarians from all walks of life who also love their communities and neighbours and have taught me so much.

Your biggest fan,
Lisa Chong

THE HSCA TEAM

Staff Listing

Ali McMillan
Alysha Fenton
Amy Kettenbach
Arvi Estepa
Arvy Pol
Bilkis Oyeyemi
Bonnie Constable
Brittany Andres
Cale Horvath
Camie Chanasyk
Carmela Kraljic
Carsan Belanger
Catherine Bartlett
Clayton Anderson
Daisy Ontolan
Dave Berezowski
David Noble
David Lundmark
Dean Elasz
Debbie Olson
Emily Jones
Ester Balallo
Ethan McKinley
Genevieve Fisher
Grace Coffey
Gurpreet Veheniwal
Heather Ramshaw
Honeylette Cacanindin
Jessica Ma
Jesslyn Woitas
Jocelyn Jaffray
Karl Kingsley
Kathleen Stenson
Kiley O'Neill
Kristen Fidierchuk
Kristina Kurlykova

Kyle Smith
Lily Gaetz
Lisa Chong
Makenna Woitas
Marietta Quil-o
Marla Caliging
Marlene Castillo
Matt Youens
Meg Walcer
Meg Armour
Melanie Bigueras
Michael Sawers
Myrah Fraser
Nhi Lai
Noah Palaschuk
Olivia Smail
Pavel Devia
Razia Monir-Shah
Rene Rousseau
Robert Corless
Saskia Groot
Selina Wagner
Shannon Martel
Shaye Radford
Shiloh Hughes
Signy Burns
Sonia Sharma
Sophie Bandula
Stephanie Corbett
Tania Denton
Teagan Donald
Tolu Okunola
Vesna Beocanin
Vilma Gomez
Zahara Yusef
Zainab Ammar



Looking Ahead...

As we look ahead to the end of 2022, we are focusing on three strategic priorities: **Connecting our Community, Supporting Community Members, and Financial and Succession Planning.**

Through these priorities, we will continue supporting community-led initiatives, looking for new ways to make our programs and services more inclusive and accessible and establishing plans that will ensure our longevity in this community.

While we don't anticipate a swift return to normal, we will continue a gradual process of reopening; taking caution to keep our community safe and looking for new and innovative ways to engage within and beyond our walls.



photo by Ben Hames