

WORKING TOGETHER



A MAGAZINE OF THE WINNIPEG FOUNDATION SPRING 2024



National Centre for
Truth and Reconciliation

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

A PLACE TO HEAL

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION
BUILDING PERMANENT HOME

THE
WINNIPEG
FOUNDATION



Your Community Foundation
For Good. Forever.





Pitikwé Skatepark, a safe and welcoming space for youth that opened in Portage Place in October 2023, encourages community building, physical activity, and a sense of belonging. Carly Sanderson, a Team Lead at the skatepark, and Amber Clark, Board Member for Pitikwé, invite visitors to “pitikwé,” a Cree word meaning “come in.”

A WINNIPEG WHERE COMMUNITY LIFE FLOURISHES FOR ALL

The Winnipeg Foundation is **For Good. Forever.**

We help people give back to our shared community by connecting generous donors with causes they care about **For Good.** We are an endowment-based public foundation, so gifts are pooled and invested and the annual earnings are granted back to the community **Forever.**

We strive to be a catalyst for strengthening community well-being, now and for future generations, by promoting philanthropy, creating partnerships, and supporting diverse charitable organizations. Formed in 1921, we are proud to be the first community foundation in Canada.

We are committed to working with everyone in our community toward a shared goal of truth and reconciliation. A copy of the Philanthropic Community's Declaration of Action was signed in 2015 by The Foundation and helps guide our strategic direction. In 2020, we became a signatory of the City of Winnipeg's Indigenous Accord.

The Winnipeg Foundation is located on Treaty 1 Territory, the original lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and the homeland of the Red River Métis.

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A MAGAZINE OF THE WINNIPEG FOUNDATION SPRING 2024

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If you do not wish to receive this print publication, please contact us. The magazine is also available on our website.

The Foundation strives to ensure we reflect the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people of all abilities. If there is anything we can do to make this publication more accessible, please contact us at communications@wpgfdn.org.

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On the cover: Dr. Levinia Brown at an event announcing the \$5-million lead gift from The Winnipeg Foundation to a \$40-million capital campaign supporting the NCTR's permanent home on Treaty One Territory.



FEATURES

15 COVERING CLIMATE

18 A PLACE TO HEAL: NATIONAL CENTRE FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

22 JUMP MATH HELPS MANITOBA TEACHERS

37 COMFORT THROUGH COMPANIONSHIP

40 IF WINNIPEG WALLS COULD TALK: WINNIPEG ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION

DEPARTMENTS

5
FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

7
FROM OUR CEO

12
COMMUNITY COLUMN:
CONNIE NEWMAN

31
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
PROFILE: BOISSEVAIN AND
MORTON

39
PROMISING PROJECTS

49
FROM THE DESK OF:
CECILY HILDEBRAND

STORIES

8
RECONCILIATION THUNDER

10
ARTS AND ACCESSIBILITY
AT CRESCENT FORT ROUGE
UNITED CHURCH

13
IMAGINING GREENER FUTURES

16
BURROWING OWLS FIND
NEW HOMES

24
PITIKWÉ SKATEPARK

26
ANN M. ZEBROWSKI AWARD

27
THE EVOLUTION OF RIVERWOOD
HOUSE

29
THOMAS SILL: THE LEGACY OF A
QUIET PHILANTHROPIST

32
ENDOW MANITOBA CONFERENCE

35
WINNIPEG FOUNDATION
INNOVATION FUND: RADY
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

42
HOLY NAMES HOUSE OF PEACE

44
MOFFAT FAMILY MILESTONE

46
MEET YOUR COMMUNITY
GENEROSITY TEAM

48
GENERATIONS OF GENEROISTY



MESSAGE FROM GEORGE BASS, K.C., ICD.D BOARD CHAIR

As the new Chair of the Board of The Winnipeg Foundation, it gives me a great sense of community and commitment to help lead this venerable organization. The Winnipeg Foundation has been caring for the community for more than 103 years, and it will continue to do so because of the generations of generous donors who want to work together with us to make our city a better place.

I've served on the Board of The Foundation since 2017, in many different capacities and on various committees. As one of 17 Board members, we've had many working discussions about The Foundation's path forward and provided meaningful input into our new Strategic Plan.

The Plan is guiding our way forward as we address evolving and long-standing issues in our community. Through the plan, our focus on addressing the challenges of the C.A.R.E. area, and Kids in Care in the child welfare system, are audacious goals. In our second century, The Foundation is dreaming big and looking at those most vulnerable in our society and the underlying issues that detract from everyone having equal opportunities to succeed, particularly in these two areas.

No one organization will 'fix' our city's problems overnight - or even within the timelines of a four-year Strategic Plan. However, we are going to keep pushing ahead - in collaboration with those working in these areas specifically, and the charitable sector overall. As a 360-degree grant-maker, The Foundation is here to help ensure there are more opportunities for everyone to succeed. Success takes on many forms - from having a safe home, to access to education, to enjoying our vibrant arts, to tangible mental health supports and well-being, to affordable childcare and food on the table, and so much more. The Winnipeg Foundation is working together with many community partners to help ensure 'a Winnipeg where community life flourishes for all' - we hope you will join us in this work.



THE WINNIPEG FOUNDATION'S STRATEGIC PLAN (2023-2026)

The Winnipeg Foundation's Strategic Plan (2023-2026) outlines how we intend to grow past granting to support the changing needs of our community. As a 360-degree grant maker, The Foundation will continue to support all areas of our city's needs through its responsive grant programs. This includes all cause areas in our city's vibrant charitable sector; from children, youth, and families to arts, culture, and heritage, environment and animal welfare, health, wellness, and recreation, to literacy education, and employment. All charities play a vital role in our community and are instrumental in our quality of life.

THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE NEW STRATEGIC PLAN THAT LEAD OUR WORK AND FOCUS ARE:



COMMUNITY IMPACT:

The Community Impact Pillar of The Winnipeg Foundation's Strategic Plan addresses critical issues that have been identified by our community and the Vital Signs® 2022 report. The Foundation has heard that increasing equity in the philanthropic sector and providing additional support to Vital Signs® key findings, such as homelessness, hunger, and addiction, are urgent priorities.



COMMUNITY GENEROSITY:

The Community Generosity Pillar supports the continued generosity of Manitobans through connecting donors and community. Growing unrestricted funds, such as our Community Fund, increasing diversity within our donor base, and championing generosity throughout the province will help solve our most urgent and long-term priorities.



COMMUNITY ENDOWMENTS:

The Community Endowments Pillar reflects emerging donor goals and enhances our ability to respond to immediate community priorities. Encouraging gifts that support urgent need, as well as exploring access to capital in support of community priorities, will allow us to address critical issues with flexibility and agility.



COMMUNITY CHAMPION:

The Community Champion Pillar of The Winnipeg Foundation's Strategic Plan focuses on two key priorities; improving the well-being of people living within the Community Area for Revitalization and Equity (C.A.R.E.) and reducing the number of children engaged in Manitoba's child welfare system, along with supporting better outcomes for youth aging out of the system.

You will see these pillars appear within select stories throughout this magazine. The pillars are a quick reference point, connecting the story you've just read to The Foundation's Strategic Plan priorities. We are accountable to our community and committed to ensuring you are kept informed about and engaged in our work. Linking stories to the plan – *A Community of Well-being* – is one way we will share our goals and the impact of our new trajectory.

MESSAGE FROM SKY BRIDGES

PRESIDENT & CEO

As your community foundation, we recognize and respect that there are committed charitable organizations in our city that have been tackling overarching community issues for years. A clear focus for The Winnipeg Foundation looking ahead will be helping grow our charitable sector's capacity. Our goal is to move forward, together. We cannot grant our way out of our community's challenges but together we are better positioned for success.

When we think about our city's humble beginnings – at the meeting of two rivers and now celebrating its 150th anniversary this year – it is a reminder of the long way we've come collectively as a community, and the work still to be done ahead on this path of truth and reconciliation.



The Winnipeg Foundation, through the generosity of its donors, has an opportunity to fulfill our vision of a Winnipeg where community life flourishes for all. Our donors believe in our community, and believe when we work together, we can have greater success. We thank our generous donors for the faith and trust they have placed in us.

It is because of their ongoing faith and trust that The Foundation has been able to provide the largest grant to an Indigenous organization in our history. In March, we announced a \$5 million gift to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation's campaign to create a new, permanent home at the University of Manitoba. You can read a feature profile about the announcement in this issue of the magazine. We hope The Foundation's lead grant reflects our ongoing commitment to Truth and Reconciliation and will inspire others from across the country to support this national centre. We are better when we work together.

In this issue of our magazine, you will read many stories of impact, generosity, hope and courage. A new feature column in the publication brings expertise from our community to these pages – we're starting with Connie Newman and the importance of battling isolation in our senior population.

Miigwetch, Thank you, Merci.



“THERE’S A LOT OF HISTORY THAT THE MAJORITY OF CANADIANS DON’T KNOW, THERE ARE SOLUTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN OUT THERE FOR YEARS... THE CHALLENGE IS THAT IF PEOPLE DON’T HAVE THE BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT A TREATY IS AND THE LEGAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TREATIES, IF THAT’S NOT PART OF OUR COMMON KNOWLEDGE, HOW CAN WE LIVE ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT OF THE TREATIES? HOW CAN WE SEE RECONCILIATION HAPPEN IF PEOPLE DON’T HAVE THE BASIC KNOWLEDGE OF WHERE THINGS WENT WRONG AND HOW WE CAN FIX THEM TOGETHER?”

RECONCILIATION THUNDER



Jimmy Thunder's participation in The Winnipeg Foundation's Youth in Philanthropy program led him down a path to founding Reconciliation Thunder, a non-profit organization focused on Truth and Reconciliation.

SHEDDING LIGHT ON HISTORY AND WORKING TO CHANGE THE FUTURE

Former Youth in Philanthropy participant Jimmy Thunder wears many hats. A policy manager for the Government of Manitoba and adjunct professor with the University of Manitoba, Thunder also serves as the Board Chair for his non-profit, Reconciliation Thunder.

A member of Sachigo Lake First Nation, Thunder spent much of his childhood in Sioux Lookout, a town of about 6,000 people in northwestern Ontario. His mother's pursuit of post-secondary education brought Thunder to Winnipeg, where he joined The Winnipeg Foundation's Youth in Philanthropy (YiP) program in 2002 at R. B. Russell Vocational High School.

"It was huge," says Thunder, "Youth in Philanthropy was an opportunity to see how we, as youth, could affect change in such a large city with so many people. It was an introduction to a lot of the good organizations that were operating in Winnipeg."

Thunder looks back on what he learned through the program with appreciation.

"We learned how to do interviews with the leaders of different organizations, how to rank them and how to look at what outcomes we wanted for the community and put them into our ranking system," says Thunder, adding administrative and reporting to the list of skills he picked up as a YiP participant.

While all of these skills were beneficial, it was a speech he was asked to make at the end-of-year YiP event that left a lasting impression on Thunder, marking the first of many throughout his career.

"That was my very first time speaking to a crowd that big," says Thunder. "I was super nervous. I was from such a small town, and so it felt like the full population of my town was in a room."

At the time, Thunder's mother shared notes from her university studies on how to speak in public. Thunder put the principles from those notes to work in that speech, and in each of his many speeches since, on everything from class presentations to speaking on Truth and Reconciliation. It was a speech reflecting on what Thunder had learned about Truth and Reconciliation that made way for many more public speaking opportunities, and from there, Reconciliation Thunder was born.

Reconciliation Thunder is a non-profit established to educate and empower community leaders to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) 94 Calls to Action, address institutional racism, and create long term change. One of the organization's main goals is to create free resources, often in the form of videos and graphics posted on social media. Its #94in94 campaign gained popularity for its promotion of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action – one call to action was posted each day for 94 days, along with resources relayed to that call to action. The organization's ongoing campaign, #History4Reconciliation consists of a series of videos outlining about 40 of the most important historical moments that will help people better understand that TRC's 94 Calls to Action.

"The idea for both of those is to target the next generation and give them a way of explaining some of these key historical moments, and helping more people grow up with that base knowledge of reconciliation," says Thunder. "There's a lot of history that the majority of Canadians don't know, there are solutions that have been out there for years ... the challenge is that if people don't have the basic understanding of what

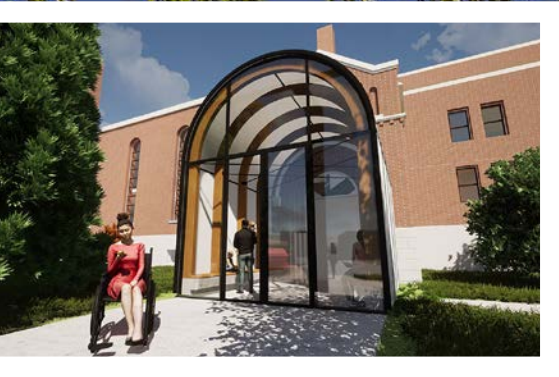
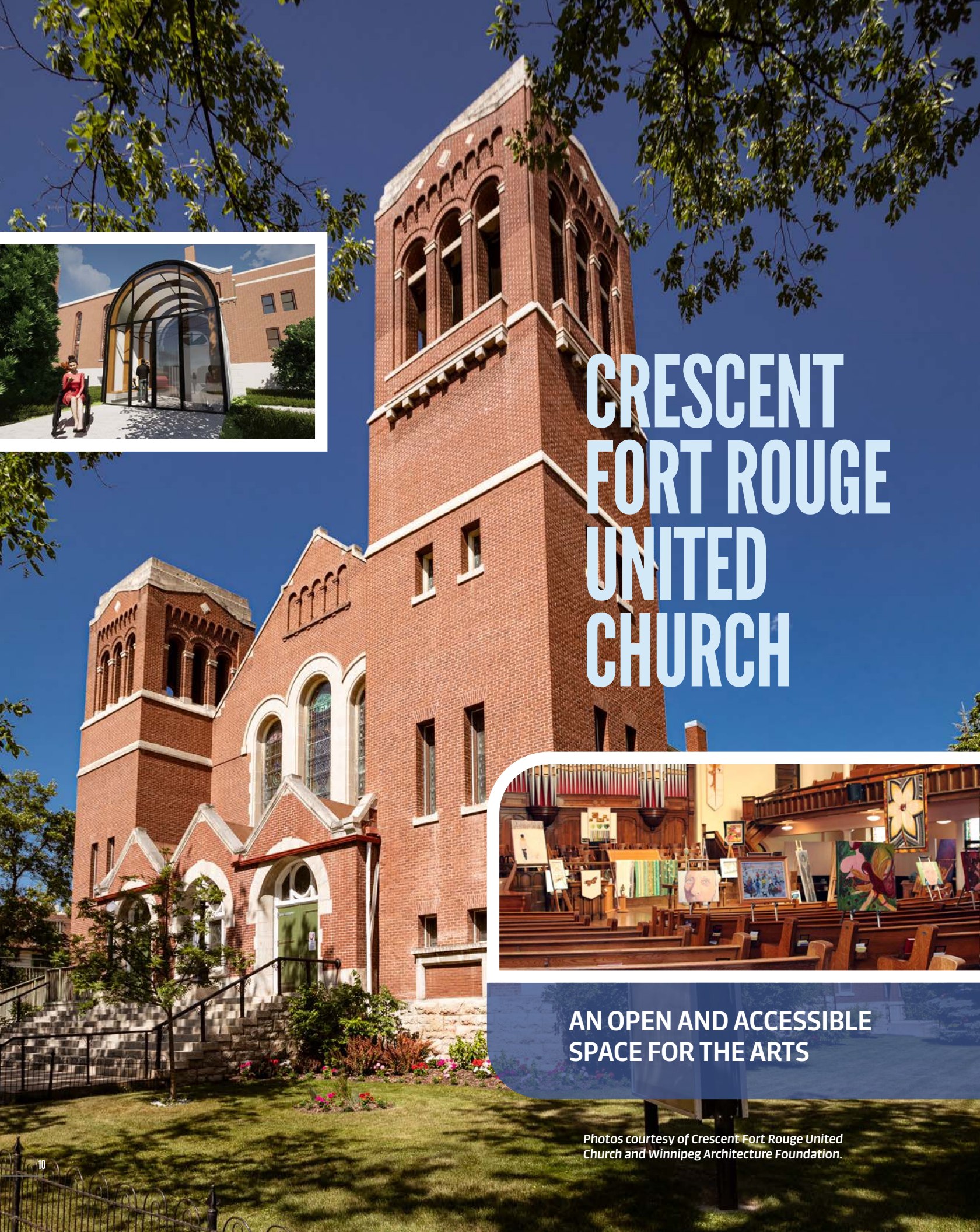
a treaty is and the legal and historical significance of the treaties, if that's not part of our common knowledge, how can we live according to the spirit of the treaties? How can we see reconciliation happen if people don't have the basic knowledge of where things went wrong and how we can fix them together?"

Putting Reconciliation Thunder out into the world has not been without its challenges, the biggest of which is balancing the work of the non-profit alongside the other commitments that each of the board members hold. But the idea that the organization is contributing to change keeps Thunder and his team moving forward.

"WHEN WE TALK ABOUT RECONCILIATION, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT SOMETHING THAT'S MASSIVE IN SCOPE," SAYS THUNDER. "IT'S NOT JUST LOCAL TO ONE CITY OR TOWN, IT'S ACROSS CANADA. THERE'S A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF WORK THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE, AND THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF WORK – LEGAL WORK, POLICY WORK, RELATIONSHIP BUILDING WORK."

Thunder explains that what he loves about the TRC's 94 Calls to Action is they break reconciliation into pieces and tell everybody that they have a role to play, and that role matters.

"For us with this non-profit, our piece is the educational and community awareness piece. It's not going to solve the whole problem, but it contributes to what other actors are doing," says Thunder. "We're doing our part, knowing that we're doing our role – in this place and in this time, in this generation, with this audience – things will be different because we did our part."



CRESCENT FORT ROUGE UNITED CHURCH



**AN OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE
SPACE FOR THE ARTS**

Photos courtesy of Crescent Fort Rouge United Church and Winnipeg Architecture Foundation.



Sandi Howell and Linda Thorlakson are long-time members of the Crescent Fort Rouge United Church (CFRUC) congregation, and co-chairs of CFRUC's Community Partnerships initiative. Howell and Thorlakson were both looking for a church they could feel truly invested in when they found the CFRUC community.

Howell, who joined church in 2009, says, "My partner and I had been exploring various churches in the area and this one was appealing. But then my partner died from cancer and I thought, community. That's what I need at the time, and this is an extremely welcoming community."

Thorlakson has been attending CFRUC for about 40 years. Like Howell, she also lived in the area, and says, "I had a list of the churches I was going to go and check out and this was the first one I came to. I never left." Thorlakson says people were key to this decision, but the building also had a part to play.

CFRUC was built in 1910 and is a beautiful Gothic Revival structure, replete with square towers and stunning stained glass. The sanctuary, which is renowned for its fine acoustics, seats 800 people and is home to an impressive Casavant organ. In addition to the sanctuary, the building has several other halls and meeting rooms of various sizes.

The picturesque setting belies a struggle many churches currently face; how to deal with shrinking congregations and rising costs. Within CFRUC, there has been a growing awareness that the congregation is getting older and young people are not as likely to participate in the same way as preceding generations.

"If the church was going to live into the future, they had to become much more involved with community," says Howell. To her, that was a call to action.

Thorlakson said it was an emotional time for the congregation as they grappled with the possibility of closing CFRUC's doors. "The congregation did come to the conclusion that maybe we're not here forever, but we're going to be here for the community now," says Thorlakson.

One of the ways CFRUC is working towards longevity is by opening the space to the broader community, predominantly through the arts. Over the years, many organizations have, and continue to, use the space for practice, performances, workshops, arts programs, and yoga. Offering seniors programs of substance is another priority; you will find more than the standard card game at CFRUC. For some, the church has become a second home.

As the church began planning for its future, it became apparent that although they had plenty of beautiful space to share, much of it could not be utilized due to accessibility. The building is more than a century old and much of it is not built to today's required building standards.

In the last few years, work has been done to retrofit new doors, make way for an elevator, create a ground level entryway, install motion detecting door openers, accessible washrooms, and more. However, to complete the renovations needed, work is being done in three phases and needs financial support. Thanks to members of the congregation and community support the first phase is nearing completion.

Serving the Fort Rouge neighborhood for more than 130 years, CFRUC has a vision of being a 'safe place for all people to gather regardless of race, creed, age, ability, cultural background, sexual orientation, or gender expression.'

The current work around improving safety and accessibility will allow CFRUC to be even more accessible for all. The Winnipeg Foundation recently provided a capital grant to help with this important accessibility work.



Sense of Belonging

Having a sense of belonging is a key finding in Winnipeg's Vital Signs® 2022. A sense of belonging is a human need, much like food and shelter, and is linked to positive social participation and engagement, stronger feelings of safety, and better health overall. Being part of a community and having access to places that foster connection are crucial components of well-being.

SOCIAL ISOLATION IS AT AN ALL-TIME HIGH

Social isolation was a problem prior to COVID, but the pandemic exacerbated the issue. The city of Winnipeg is no exception, with many of our citizens living in isolation and finding it very difficult to get connected.

In 2006, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations (UN) began looking at changing demographics within communities around the world. Thanks to the research they produced and the collaboration of international leaders from various countries, the Age Friendly focus was created. Social participation was one of its eight domains.

In 2015, Manitoba's demographics saw changes – there were more adults over the age of 65 than children under age 15. This demographic shift can be felt in all aspects of society, from human resources to employment opportunities across sectors. Today, coming out of COVID, we are seeing more people of all ages living in isolation for a variety of reasons.

WE KNOW THAT SOCIAL PARTICIPATION IS A DETERMINANT OF ONE'S OWN HEALTH; AS A COMMUNITY, AS A SOCIETY, WE MUST LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER, AND AS INDIVIDUALS WE MUST SEEK OUT THE MANY OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED TO GET US CONNECTED.

Age-friendly communities offer a variety of social events, indoor and outdoor, and include intergenerational activities. Newcomers and older adults that may be isolated are encouraged to reach out, are paid visits, and their participation choices are respected. People are encouraged via their social networks to attend events that celebrate physical activity, culture, education, art, and community. Regardless of the type of event, a feeling of belonging and overall healthy living is promoted.

The WHO and Ten Years of Healthy Aging continue to create opportunities to make appropriate adaptations and investments to foster healthy aging across sectors, including integrated health and social care and age-friendly environments. We can all reap the benefits of these innovations, which will help improve health and nutrition, advance skills, and knowledge, and create social connectivity, financial security, and personal dignity for all.

Many of our local opportunities in Winnipeg may be found by calling 211 or checking out their database on the 211 website <https://mb.211.ca/>.

Getting connected is a determinant of one's own health - be friendly, say hi, and find an event near you. Winnipeg has many opportunities for all of us!

Connie Newman, Executive Director
Manitoba Association of Senior Communities
Age Friendly MB Initiative
Social Prescribing MB Initiative





IMAGINING GREENER— AND CLEANER —FUTURES



USHERING MANITOBA'S JUST ENERGY TRANSITION THROUGH LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT BY CIERRA BETTENS

Zachary Rempel, a policy analyst with IISD's energy team, is conducting research on low-carbon development.

To limit global warming to the 1.5 degree Celsius target set by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate experts stress an urgent need to reduce emissions. Low-carbon development is recognized as an innovative way to reduce CO₂ emissions while supporting economic growth.

As the city and province seek ways to secure a more climate-friendly future, environmental organizations across the city are investigating innovative ways to support a just clean energy transition.

One such organization is the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), which is using a grant from The Winnipeg Foundation to support cutting-edge policy research on low-carbon development.

"If we're going to be serious about our climate targets, there are these huge steps forward that need to be taken, and there is not very much research done to understand exactly how we're going to do that or what that's going to look like," Zachary Rempel, a policy analyst within the IISD's energy team, says. "So, we are using funding from The Winnipeg Foundation to investigate this."

In late 2017, a group of environmental organizations from across the province banded together to independently assess the Manitoba Government's Climate and Green Plan. Today, the coalition, known as Manitoba's Climate Action Team, is composed of five member organizations: Climate Change Connection, Wilderness Committee – Manitoba Office, Green Action Centre, Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition and Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba Office.

"We've all pooled our resources and expertise to come together and create a roadmap that outlines how Manitoba could affordably reach zero emissions in the province," Bethany Daman, communications manager at the Climate Action Team says.

Thanks to support from The Winnipeg Foundation, the coalition continues to develop climate solutions that make sense on a local scale.

"We've been able to document solutions that would work very well in Manitoba based on the research that we've done evaluating other locations and information from global scientists," Daman says.

From vehicle electrification to solar energy projects, low-carbon development can look like a lot of things—and it can start right at home.

Geothermal energy systems offer a cleaner alternative to home than those that use natural gas. In the long run, Manitoba Hydro suggests annual heating costs with a geothermal system are 50 to 70 per cent lower than conventional systems.

The problem is that for many homeowners, the price tag of making the switch to more energy-efficient heating systems is unaffordable, Daman says.

"That's a huge barrier for a lot of people right now, to actually be able to make their homes more energy efficient through additional insulation, new windows, new doors," Daman says. "Everything that's required in a clean energy retrofit is out of reach for a lot of Manitobans, which not only means that we're stuck in a horrible cycle of extremely high energy costs, but we're also stuck in a cycle of extremely high energy consumption."

Bethany Daman, a communications manager at the Green Action Centre, is working on developing and sharing climate solutions on a local scale.



IMAGINING GREENER— AND CLEANER—FUTURES (CONTINUED)

A viable solution to this, Daman says, is providing financial incentives to offset the cost of home energy retrofits. Currently, the Manitoba Government offers a refundable tax credit of up to 15 per cent towards the installation of a geothermal heat pump system.

On a larger scale, Daman says a handful of commercial spaces in Winnipeg – including Manitoba Hydro's head office – have already installed geothermal energy systems.

In discussing low carbon development, Rempel stresses a just energy transition – one that accounts for the social and economic components, like equity and job creation.

While strides have been made, there's still far more work to be done and actions to be taken.

"A lot of people just don't think about climate change. Reducing emissions is not at the top of their priorities," Rempel says. "People are living their lives, they have all kinds of challenges they're trying to manage, and reducing emissions is like an additional challenge on top of all of those things."

For sustainable development groups like the IISD, the task at hand is to help Manitobans and policy makers see the value of low-carbon development while providing practical recommendations to make a clean energy transition.

Financial support from The Winnipeg Foundation has allowed both the IISD and the Manitoba Climate Action Team to carry out critically important research – work that Daman says can help guide public policy.

"The more we don't prioritize this transition to a low-carbon economy, the higher the cost will be," Daman says.

UNIQUE MEDIA
PARTNERSHIP
CREATED CRUCIAL
ENVIRONMENTAL
REPORTER POSITION

COVERING CLIMATE



A midst shrinking newsrooms of journalists trying to do more with less, a partnership between the *Winnipeg Free Press* and *The Narwhal* is shining light on one of the most important issues of our time. Julia-Simone Rutgers is the Manitoba Environment Reporter, a position created as a collaboration between the *Free Press* and *The Narwhal*, with support from The Winnipeg Foundation. Since May 2022, she has covered everything from chronic wasting disease, to parks protection, to a controversial proposed silica mine, all within Manitoba's borders. When the position was created, Rutgers was drawn to the challenge of it.

"I don't have a science background. One of the biggest challenges of the role was I was going to be on a topic that would have a steep learning curve, and that was really exciting," says Rutgers. "I also felt very sure that climate stories and covering climate change is going to be one of the most important topics of the next several years."

In the early days of the position when Rutgers was trying to determine what the beat looked like and what climate stories are currently happening in Manitoba, she learned that Manitoba is a unique province. While *The Narwhal* has reporters in British Columbia covering old growth forests, in Alberta covering the oil sands, and in Ontario covering urban encroachment on green space, at first blush Manitoba doesn't appear to have any glaring climate stories; dig deeper and those stories are common across the province.

"Manitoba is really such a unique place, and there are climate stories everywhere you look," says Rutgers. "What I've learned is there's no shortage of stories to tell both in these broad and sweeping all-across-the-province perspectives ... and also on these very local scales."

One hyper-local story that comes to mind for Rutgers is a piece on the air quality and contamination in the soil in Point Douglas. With the luxury of time on her side, Rutgers is able to dig in and really get to know the communities she is writing about, and the people affected by these stories. She says she is passionate about writing about communities, people and topics that often don't get fair play in the news.

"Telling these stories with a bit more depth has given me opportunity to get so much knowledge about so many interesting, sometimes quirky, incredibly important and meaningful topics. It's been fascinating just how many things make up Manitoba's environmental world."

Being able to take time to get to know an issue, the communities it affects and to build relationships also goes a long way in earning the trust of the public at a time when trust in media and the news is declining. A large part of a journalist's role is to hold people in power to account, and while many newsrooms across the country lack the resources to properly do this due to layoffs, Rutgers feels lucky to have the time to research and properly understand the issues she is reporting on so that when she is in rooms with people in power she can have hard-hitting conversations.

"With the environment, political will is really central to how we address climate issues in Manitoba, and being able to – particularly around the election – press leaders or candidates about what they're actually going to do, what their awareness is of the issues facing the province, and be able to put facts in front of them, ask the questions and dig past the positive approach that the government wants to take and really look at what's going on," says Rutgers, who feels lucky to do the kind of investigative journalism that journalism school students often dream of doing, and especially to be able to write about the climate.

"Climate change is inescapable right now, and in order to adapt to what is quite clearly a growing existential threat, we need people on it ... in an ideal world, every publication would have a beat reporter who is focused on climate."

You can find climate change stories by Rutgers at <https://thenarwhal.ca/> and <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/>.

Julia-Simone Rutgers speaks with cattle farmer Don Guilford for a story about wetland preservation in the agriculture industry. Photo courtesy of John Woods/Winnipeg Free Press.

CHANGE

Strategic Plan > Climate Change

Climate change is one of the most urgent issues of our time, and failure to address it will affect many of the priorities The Foundation cares about, including equity & human rights, health, poverty alleviation, recreation, and community well-being. Climate change is one of the key lenses we will view all our community work through.

BURROWING OWLS FIND NEW HOMES



When we think of endangered species, we tend to think about exotic, faraway lands, but right here in Manitoba the burrowing owl population has declined over 96% since 1987, and one organization is working to change that.

Alex Froese, founder and executive director of the Manitoba Burrowing Owl Recovery Program (MBORP) is a wildlife biologist who studied Manitoba wildlife in university, and now works tirelessly to educate and bring awareness to the endangered burrowing owl. She is assisted by Bindi, a full-grown burrowing owl, and an ambassador for the cause.

"I wanted to mix my love of endangered species work with owl work, and luckily (but unfortunately), we have an endangered owl here in the province that really needed a champion and a program to get going," says Froese. "Without conservation and management, burrowing owls won't be able to stick around; they're conservation dependent."

Froese started MBORP in 2013, and although there is no single factor responsible for the decline of burrowing owls and other grassland species, the major factor for burrowing owls is loss of habitat; changing grasslands to other land uses, such as housing, roads, and modern agriculture. Burrowing owls don't build their own nests, they rely on other animals like foxes, ground squirrels, or gophers.

"If you change these grasslands to something else, any of the species that rely on that grass are not going to be able to flourish. In a lot of my presentations and outreach, I talk about how biodiversity is so important," says Froese. "If you get rid of [grasslands], the species that live there can't survive. If you remove something from an environment, no matter how small it may seem, it has a ripple effect on the whole ecosystem."

While MBORP has received support from The Winnipeg Foundation, among others, the organization has seen a decline in public funding during the past five years. This decline has limited Froese's capacity to do this work, but as the sole employee of the Manitoba Burrowing Owl Recovery Program, she plans community events and last year alone brought Bindi the owl to over 35 school presentations in 2023.

"We prioritize education events in southwestern Manitoban communities, because those are the people that are likely going to see a burrowing owl, since their range is only in southwestern Manitoba at this point in time."

If someone discovers an owl on their property, the landowner can contact the program by calling 204-807-HOOT, and MBORP will have a conversation with that landowner, and they can come up with a plan together. They can set up a camera to monitor what's going on at the burrow and educate folks about best practices to ensure the survival and thriving of the species.



While the 96% population decline is staggering, there has been some good news in the last few years. "In a decade with our program, we're actually seeing wild owls coming back to Manitoba," says Froese. "It's so gratifying. During 2019 through 2023, those field seasons and breeding seasons we've seen huge improvements and so many owls coming back in family groups."

Every year the organization does roadside surveys and surveys on southern properties. Recently, they have also been working with landowners who are open to artificial nest burrows, which seem to appeal to the returning owls.

"Grasslands are one of the most in-peril ecosystems in the world, and it's in our backyard. I think a lot of people think about endangered ecosystems or species as something that's not here; we think about the rainforest or the Great Barrier Reef, and those things are important, but they're so far away," says Froese. "When you can connect people to something that is right here, right in our backyard, it hits a little differently. It's real."

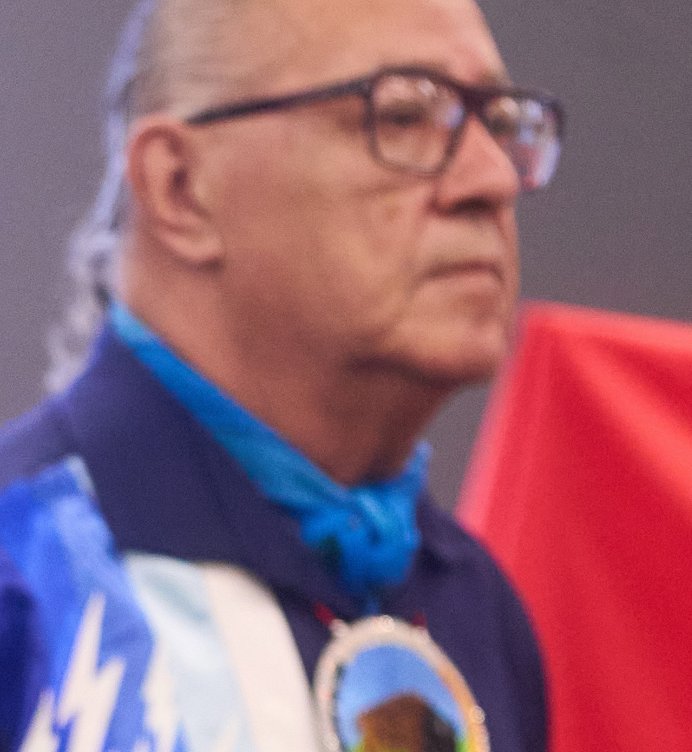
To see more photos of Bindi, follow them on Instagram @kokoandbindi or visit their organization website <https://www.mborp.ca/>





A PLACE

Elder Philip Paynter



TO HEAL

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to have a permanent home

Residential school survivors shared stories, prayers, and songs at an NCTR event announcing The Winnipeg Foundation's \$5-million gift to a \$40-million capital campaign.

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) announced a \$5 million lead gift from The Winnipeg Foundation for the building of its new home at a moving and emotional event in March 2024.

"This is an exciting day for the NCTR, and my spirit is filled with hope as I look around the room and see many leaders, friends, and supporters in the audience," said Stephanie Scott, executive director of the NCTR, who is a survivor of the 60s scoop and the daughter of a residential school survivor.

The event began with the display of a memorial cloth featuring the names of more than 2,800 residential school students who never made it home, followed by an opening prayer, drum song, pipe and water ceremony, and the lighting of the qulliq, a traditional Inuit oil lamp.

Sky Bridges, president and CEO of The Winnipeg Foundation, announced the gift to great applause.

"The Foundation believes and works daily and reflects on the important work of the goals of reconciliation and truth. It is in that truth that we can move forward in reconciliation. And inside that truth, when you have that compassion and you learn about the journey of survivors, your heart is going to crack and open a bit, and it's going to get bigger when it heals, and that's the journey we're on," said Bridges.

"It is important to note that this gift comes from love. Part of the definition of philanthropy is to love someone you don't know. It's incredible to think that this gift of \$5 million is a gift from thousands of hearts from the past to help make a better future."

"THERE HAVE BEEN DECADES OF WORK THAT GOT US TO THIS POINT, AND I NEVER WANT TO FORGET THAT ... AND ONE DAY, MAYBE NOT IN MY LIFETIME, WE WILL FULLY UNDERSTAND WHAT HAPPENED, AND THE NUMBER OF LIVES LOST, AND HOW WE BEGIN TO HEAL," SAYS SCOTT.

A PLACE TO HEAL (CONTINUED)

The NCTR, which has the spirit name bezhig miigwan, meaning ‘one feather,’ opened at the end of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 2015, and has operated for the past nine years out of a squat brick building on the University of Manitoba campus.

“It’s a former chancellor’s home that also resembles a residential school, which is very difficult and challenging, not only for survivors that come to visit us, but for their families as well,” says Scott, adding that the NCTR has grown from 20 to 60 staff who are spread across campus due to a lack of space. There is also no room left in the building for the more than 2,500 sacred items that the NCTR has been entrusted with. The items include gifts for survivors from Indigenous peoples around the world, such as pipes and sacred artifacts from their land, that are currently housed in various locations.

The new building, which will sit on a piece of riverfront land gifted to the NCTR by the University of Manitoba, is expected to cost \$100 million, with \$60 million already committed by the federal government. A permanent home for the NCTR is something that Scott heard was deeply important to survivors in her previous role of Manager of Statement Gathering with the TRC.

“It was really important to survivors, no matter where I was from coast to coast to coast, that they had a space to protect and preserve the survivor statements. Those survivor statements are really a gift – not only to their families but to all Canadians,” says Scott. “It was essential that we have this building in order to ensure that there is longevity and that the residential school system never happens again.”

One of those survivors is Dr. Levinia Brown, who hails from Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, and who attended residential school in Chesterfield Inlet.

“It’s a historic moment, because we’re getting a home for the NCTR and the survivors,” Brown told The Foundation after the announcement. “It’s a very big deal for me to see all the attendees today who came to witness it. Today was very exciting with the gift giving... it made me happy because I saw so much warmth even without words.”

The NCTR’s new building is intended to be a warm and welcoming space for all, and visitors who enter will be greeted by sacred items including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Bentwood Box. The box, which was created by Coast Salish artist Luke Marsten, travelled with the TRC throughout Canada, where people placed personal items representative of their journey to healing and expressions of reconciliation. Eugene Arcand, a residential school survivor from Treaty 6 territory was one of two residential school survivors who accepted gifts to be placed in the Bentwood Box.

“We accepted every gift across the land, and between us we could tell who was doing it in a phony way or a paternalistic way, and who was presenting the gifts for real. The gestures of reconciliation didn’t only come from survivors, they came from the corporate community, they came from the RCMP,” Arcand told the crowd during the announcement. “We didn’t only hear but we felt when we were being misled. We also felt it when people were genuine, like today, what we’re experiencing today with the investment by The Winnipeg Foundation. I don’t look at this as a donation, I feel it as an investment.”

The new building will also house an exhibition space that will use technology to bring the NCTR’s extensive collection of items, documents, and photos to life, as well as multi-purpose community spaces, designated classrooms, a lecture theatre, indoor and outdoor ceremonial spaces and a safe, private space for survivors and their families to view records of their residential school experience and have their statements gathered.

As residential school survivors age, the gathering of their statements and oral histories becomes more time sensitive. Scott says she hopes that as long as survivors remain with us, the NCTR can continue to gather their oral histories and the testimonies of lives lived.

“Since Kamloops happened two years ago, there has been a resurgence of survivors wanting to share their life history, and some people weren’t ready during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission,” says Scott, referring to the discovery of human burials at the site of Kamloops Indian Residential School in 2021.



Survivors, family members, and other guests celebrate the announcement of NCTR’s plan to build a home on Treaty One Territory.

“With the finding of the children, it amplified the need to disclose some terrible truths. And we’re not always focusing on all of the hardships that survivors endured, but there are also stories of power that survivors speak to us every day. They remain to hold their language, they remain to hold their ceremonies.”

Scott explains that the statements collected from residential school survivors - the NCTR is a safe space for the truths of more than 7,000 survivors - as well as the 5 million records the federal government provided to the TRC “bring us to a certain point in time of truth-telling.” Arcand noted in his address to the crowd that truth is needed before reconciliation can occur.

“Everybody was trying to jump to reconciliation [during the TRC], but nobody wanted to talk about the truth. The only ones that wanted to talk about the truth were us, the survivors. There’s no shortcut to reconciliation. If you think that’s how this is going to continue, you’d better take a step back and understand that the truth has to come out first, not to hurt, but to correct.”

There is truth to be found in the NCTR’s photo collection as well.

“Some of the magic I’ve seen that has happened is we will have booklets of photos at certain times, and survivors will come in and they’ll leaf through their school,” says Scott. “Every once in a while there will be this miracle where they see themselves or they see a friend, and they’re able to identify who that person is,” says Scott.



“There’s longevity to that photo, which may not hold names, and there’s an opportunity to share and identify people that previously didn’t have a name. To me, that is also building the truth of the record ... I think that has got to be community-based.”

Scott says that bringing the NCTR’s collection of sacred items, records, survivor statements and staff together in a single space will have a benefit to reconciliation.

“There have been decades of work that got us to this point, and I never want to forget that ... And one day, maybe not in my lifetime, we will fully understand what happened, and the number of lives lost, and how we begin to heal,” says Scott. “That’s the first step in making change, and I think providing that clarity and understanding so that we can all move forward in this country - we’re all here to stay, and I think that can be the beauty of it.”



JUNE 21 IS NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

National Aboriginal Peoples Day, declared by Roméo LeBlanc, Governor General of Canada, in 1996, and now known as National Indigenous Peoples Day (NIPD), is an opportunity for all Canadians to celebrate, recognize, and honour the achievements, history, and culture of Indigenous peoples in Canada. NIPD falls on June 21 each year, when many First Nations people, Métis, and Inuit celebrate the Summer Solstice, which is the longest day of the year.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal peoples: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. Each group has their own distinct heritage, language, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs.

4.9% of all Canadians reported having an Indigenous identity in the 2016 Census.

There are more than 70 Indigenous languages that can be divided into 12 language groups: Algonquian, Inuit, Athabaskan, Siouan, Salish, Tsimshian, Wakashan, Iroquoian, Michif, Tlingit, Kutenai, and Haida.

The Winnipeg Foundation is located on Treaty 1 Territory, the original lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and the homeland of the Red River Métis.

Our drinking water comes from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, in Treaty Three Territory.

While NIPD falls on June 21, we celebrate Indigenous People every day!

'IT'S BEEN REALLY GAME-CHANGING'

JUMP MATH HELPS MANITOBA TEACHERS ADDRESS COVID LEARNING LOSS

BY CIERRA BETTENS



When pandemic lockdowns forced schools into the virtual realm in 2020, teachers like Naomi Dennie struggled to keep students engaged during math lessons. “We couldn’t play together during COVID,” Dennie says. “We couldn’t get together in groups, and discuss, and think out loud, and you know, talk about each other’s thoughts and progress.”

When classes returned to in-person, Dennie noticed that some students lacked foundational numerical skills. Today, Dennie is one of many Manitoba teachers seeking ways to address learning gaps driven by the COVID-19 pandemic. In November 2022, she started using JUMP Math to help students who had fallen behind. Founded in 2002 by Canadian mathematician, John Mighton, the program offers innovative math resources to help teachers and students bridge these gaps.

“Honestly, it’s been really game-changing,” Dennie says. “It’s like everything I need at my fingertips—the resources, the games, the explanations (and) even the practice books.”

Thanks in part to a grant from The Winnipeg Foundation, the JUMP Math curriculum is helping students across the city boost their mathematical confidence and develop essential numerical skills.

Founder Mighton was once among the many children who struggled with math. He says it took him 30 years to develop the confidence to study math, and eventually pursue a doctorate in the subject.

“I wanted to help kids so they didn’t feel the way I did, help them realize their abilities,” Mighton says. “I started the tutoring club at first, and then that grew, and we started placing students in schools. Then we realized we’d have more impact if we worked with teachers and gave them good material and training.”

That idea set the foundation for the JUMP Math program. Compared to the traditional mathematics curriculum, JUMP Math focuses on giving students confidence through skill building and by introducing incrementally challenging concepts.

“JUMP HAS A MORE RADICAL VIEW OF EQUITY THAN, I THINK, ANY OTHER PROGRAM I’M AWARE OF,” MIGHTON SAYS. “YOU NEED MATERIALS THAT MAKE ALL KIDS FEEL EQUAL. TO DO THAT THOUGH, YOU HAVE TO HAVE VERY WELL-SCAFFOLDED LESSONS. YOU HAVE TO KNOW HOW TO DELIVER THE MATH IN MEANINGFUL CHUNKS THAT KIDS CAN UNDERSTAND, WHERE THEY CAN MAKE DISCOVERIES, EXPLORE THEM, BUT WITH SOME GUIDANCE.”



Photos courtesy of JUMP Math

A typical JUMP Math lesson always includes a lot of questions, asked by both teachers and students. Every few minutes, students are quizzed to ensure the entire class understands the concepts. To keep kids interested and engaged, interactive games are sprinkled in between lessons.

As an educator, a lot of Dennie’s time is spent developing lesson plans, in addition to helping kids meet their independent learning goals. Now, with access to JUMP Math’s materials, she has more time to connect with students on their progress.

“It has everything laid out for you, whereas the regular curriculum is very traditional... it tells you what kids should know, but it doesn’t tell you how to teach that, necessarily,” Dennie says. “Instead of creating a PowerPoint, and doing all of that work, I can just focus on the specific instruction and the specific needs.”

In the years following pandemic lockdowns, Dennie found it difficult to know where to start to address learning loss. With a focus on skill mastery, she says the JUMP Math curriculum has helped her students build mathematical fluency through interactive lessons, games, and group work.

“Before I used JUMP Math, I was struggling with teaching basic counting,” Dennie says. “The foundational skills just weren’t there for those kids. Now that we’re kind of out of COVID and everything, JUMP really likes to play a lot of fluency games, and a lot of games that helped to culminate the skills we have just learned.”

Mighton believes there are three things that teachers must do to help bridge learning loss gaps—and says JUMP Math can help.

“You have to go to the right level, you have to build their confidence and help them get engaged and focused, and then you have to gradually increase difficulty,” Mighton says. “Those are really three things you need to do to address learning loss, and those are built into the program.”

For Dennie, a surefire sign that the JUMP Math program is working is the sheer number of kids asking for homework.

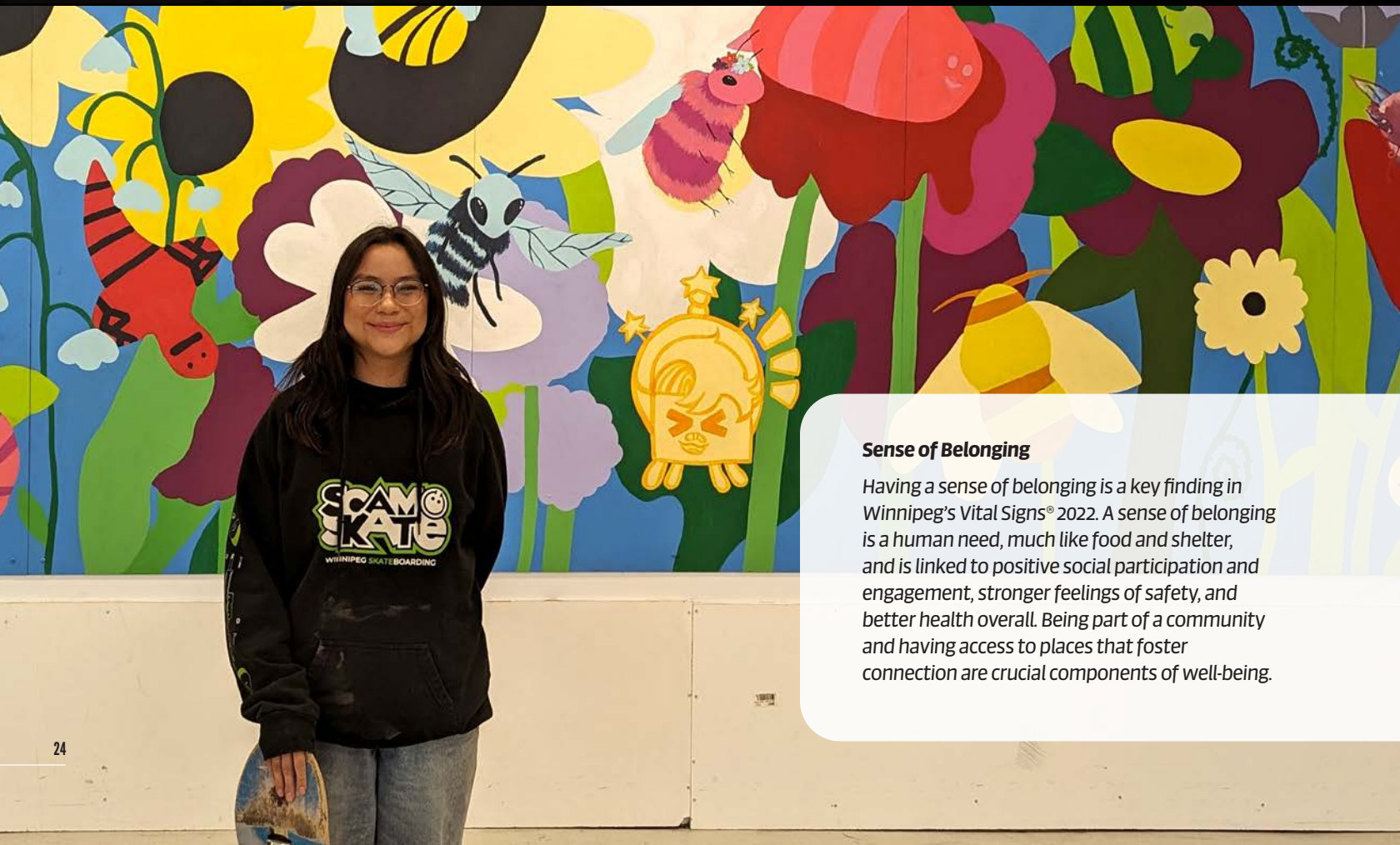
“These kids are literally so excited about doing math now that they want to continue doing it for homework,” she says. “Everyone’s on the same playing field, everyone is doing it together, and they’re all finding that success.”

Of course, it’s not just students who are benefiting from the program. As a teacher, JUMP Math has given Dennie the confidence and reassurance that she’s setting her pupils up for success.

“It’s a really successful way for kids to feel like they’ve got it, they understand. It just makes me feel so much better as a teacher,” Dennie says.



Pitikwé SKATEPARK



Sense of Belonging

Having a sense of belonging is a key finding in Winnipeg's Vital Signs® 2022. A sense of belonging is a human need, much like food and shelter, and is linked to positive social participation and engagement, stronger feelings of safety, and better health overall. Being part of a community and having access to places that foster connection are crucial components of well-being.

Building a community hub and a place to belong

There is a new downtown space inviting visitors to “pitikwé,” a Cree word meaning “come in,” join a community, participate in physical activity, and find a sense of belonging through skateboarding.

Pitikwé Skatepark opened in October 2023 in the heart of downtown Winnipeg, inside Portage Place. It took years to get the project off the ground and multiple community partners and contributors participating in the process. Pitikwé is a grassroots movement aiming to bring a safe and inclusive space to our downtown; something that youth have been missing.

“What we’re doing here is already part of the vision of what the city wants to do,” says Amber Clark-Wesley, board member for Pitikwé. “We are becoming a space for children and youth, and Indigenous children and youth, to come and have safe programming and do something positive.”

“It’s important to always have this be community driven,” says Clark-Wesley. “What it comes down to is having a lot of ongoing dialogue with the team about how to protect everybody in the space, and the diverse populations we want to all feel included, and want them to feel a sense of belonging here.”

Carly Sanderson is one of the Team Leads at Pitikwé, and reiterated the need for safe spaces for youth to learn how to skateboard.

“It’s hard to learn, and you have to create a safe space for people to feel comfortable trying new things,” says Sanderson. “It’s working at their level and teaching and helping participants have the courage to actually skate with everyone else.”

Pitikwé hosts weekly theme nights, beginner skate nights, gender inclusive skates, women and girls’ night, beading and art workshops, and Pride nights.

The skatepark is adorned with original artwork, painted skateboard decks, plants, and paintings, and the board of directors is currently having conversations about hosting additional art programming or using the space as a gallery; it all depends on partnerships, capacity, and budget restrictions.

“Collaboration is a huge part of Pitikwé,” says Clark-Wesley, “There’s been so many different organizations and local businesses and individuals and partners, that’s literally why the doors are open. Having more collaborations and partnerships moving forward will help take us to the next level and continue to be a hub for people to gather and create that community and the belonging that can come with that.”

Every day, groups of youth and young adults go to the indoor skatepark to work on their skills, connect with like-minded individuals, and feel a sense of belonging to something greater than themselves.



Amber Clark-Wesley, Board Member for Pitikwé, and Carly Sanderson, a Team Lead at the skatepark, are creating a safe and welcoming space for youth downtown.

“IT CREATES FRIENDSHIPS TOO,” SAYS SANDERSON. “I’VE MADE SO MANY FRIENDS HERE THAT I NEVER KNEW EXISTED FOR SO MANY YEARS, UNTIL I CAME HERE. AND THEY MADE ME A BETTER SKATER AND WE HANG OUT OUTSIDE SKATEBOARDING NOW AND IT’S A REAL COMMUNITY.”

“There’s a lot of hands involved and a lot of people who put a lot of sweat equity into this. There are some challenges, but there’s also these little synchronicities that have come throughout this whole journey,” says Clark-Wesley. “Little pieces of magic that fall into place when they’re meant to fall into place.”

There is still work to be done, as the maintenance and growth of the skatepark and its programming will take time and require additional partners and supports.

“We’d like to connect with organizations that have similar aligning values, like supporting inclusion, supporting diversity, supporting newcomers, supporting Indigenous people,” says Clark-Wesley. “We want to create partnerships so we can acquire better resources for our staff, so we can offer better training for our team members, improve the experience for people when they come in, and so we can make the park better.”

To learn more about Pitikwé Skatepark, visit <https://pitikweskatepark.com/>

LASTING CONNECTIONS

PROVIDE CONTINUOUS SUPPORT

Ed Zebrowski knows his life could have been significantly different if he hadn't had mentors that helped and guided him. From an elementary school teacher that kept him after class to help him avoid a bully, to a professor that took a Saturday afternoon to help him learn anatomy, they contributed to Ed's success. "I was encouraged to go on and I had people step up and help me, so I had that sense of community."

Ed, the second child of Polish immigrants, was born and raised in Winnipeg and lived his entire life in our city except for the four years he spent at the University of Wisconsin pursuing his PhD in Biological Sciences. It was at that university where he met Ann, who was getting her master's degree in nutrition.

Ed returned to Winnipeg with Ann, taking a position at the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Dentistry in the Department of Oral Biology while Ann worked at Winnipeg General Hospital (now a part of the Health Science Centre) in the Dietetic department. Within a few years, the couple had their first child, Joseph, followed by Deirdre, and then Tom.

Tom was born in 1974 with Down Syndrome. At the time, there was very little information or services to support families living with Down Syndrome. "Medical care, day program, maybe swimming lessons, whatever, were really nonexistent," recalls Ed. They found the best source of information to be other parents; they built a community of support together. In 1991, Ann and Ed, along with a handful of other families, helped establish the Manitoba Down Syndrome Society, which to this day provides information, support, and services that weren't previously available to families like the Zebrowskis.

"Tom is a teacher. What Tom teaches us is patience, tolerance, and understanding, and he does that very well," explains Ed. It was important to the Zebrowskis to help Tom find his place in our community. They recognized early on that traditional children's programs that help children learn and grow, like music and sports lessons, couldn't accommodate Tom.

Ann, along with another group of families, advocated for better programs for children living with disabilities. The families had children with different cognitive challenges, but all wanted their children to have the same opportunities as other children, to be able to interact with others, learn new skills, and contribute in their own way, especially as they grow older. Together the families helped establish SCE Lifeworks, an organization providing people living with intellectual disabilities with programs and support to help them work and volunteer in the community and discover their potential.



Ann and Ed Zebrowski with Tom (seated).

Through SCE Lifeworks, Tom has worked in various organizations for more than 30 years, since he was 18, including Seven Oaks Wellness Centre. For five years, Tom stocked shelves, wiped down equipment, and helped with other tasks until the pandemic and his move to another area of the city made it difficult for him to continue at the Centre.

With support from St.Amant, Tom was able to move to his "forever home," a bungalow in Old St. Vital he shares with two roommates. He has been a long-term resident with St.Amant's Community Residence program since 1999. It gives Ann and Ed great comfort to know that Tom has his own home. "We have Tom settled in St.Amant, which is a wonderful organization."

Ed and Ann spent a large part of their lives raising awareness, advocating, and working with others to improve the lives of people living with disabilities. They also have a long history of giving to many organizations, including to The Winnipeg Foundation since 2000. They understand that one of the largest challenges facing charitable organizations is a lack of consistent and stable funding for their operations.

Ed and Ann recently established the Edward J. and Ann M. Zebrowski Family Fund at The Winnipeg Foundation to provide continuous support to organizations that are close to their hearts – Alzheimer Society of Manitoba, Manitoba Downs Syndrome Society, SCE Lifeworks, and St.Amant. They also established the Ann M. Zebrowski Award that will allow SCE Lifeworks to recognize one of their frontline workers each year. These caring, conscientious, and dedicated individuals work daily with SCE Lifework clients like Tom.

Through their funds Ann and Ed will always be connected to these organizations, providing ongoing support for programs and services that help people in our community thrive.



The Ann M. Zebrowski Award along with a mug will be presented annually to an outstanding worker at SCE Lifeworks.

Through his roles as Community Pastor at Riverwood Church and Project Lead at Riverwood House, Jon Courtney has worked in the Elmwood community for more than 20 years. With a team of dedicated staff and volunteers, they have operated food banks, support groups, skill development programs, supported seniors dealing with isolation, and developed local responses to domestic violence. Through this broad range of work, Courtney and his staff noticed that homelessness and addiction were on the rise.

“In the last five to 10 years, certainly we’ve seen the rising need for addiction supports,” says Courtney. “We decided to step into that

world and respond to those needs. Affordable housing is recognized as a significant need, specifically in the context of homelessness and addictions.”

The seeds were planted for what would eventually become Riverwood House; a 40-suite supportive recovery housing facility for those in recovery from addictions, facing unstable housing, and requiring a substance-free environment. The Winnipeg Foundation provided a \$500,000 Major Capital Grant in November 2020 towards the construction of the estimated \$7.3 million Riverwood House.

Riverwood House the product of years of community care and collaboration

EVOLVING EFFORTS

EVOLVING EFFORTS (CONTINUED)

Before they announced the construction and implementation of Riverwood House, Courtney partnered with an organization called Finding Freedom. Finding Freedom was providing addictions and recovery support programs and were looking for a space to operate out of. That program morphed into React Winnipeg, an on-site recovery program operating out of Riverwood Church, which expanded its capacity to respond to needs arising from addictions and substance use.

In 2019, a non-profit group called Winnipeg Supportive Housing Inc. was formed by a small group of philanthropists who wanted to respond to the growing need. They formed the non-profit with the goal of building a housing complex to support people in recovery. With its vision established, they began to look at property, with a goal to build new housing and find a partner to manage operations.

“They knocked on our door, because they heard we do all this other work in the community,” says Courtney. “We began those conversations and pretty quickly said ‘absolutely. This is an amazing project, and we’d love to see this developed.’”

“Within a couple of months, we stepped in together and forged a connection. We had always been dealing with housing issues. In our support for people, it was probably the number one issue that surrounded all the external pieces: housing and the cost of housing leaves you food insecure, helping people avoid evictions, helping people who have lost their housing. We were regularly dealing with all these [issues]. We wished we had a solution for housing as well. It was perfect timing.”

Different organizations came to the table early in the process and were a crucial part of developing the framework of what Riverwood House’s programming would look like. They developed formal partnerships, but also nurtured informal relationships; people to reach out to for advice or suggestions. Collaboration and partnerships have been instrumental. Courtney and his team developed a Partner Referral Network to create a transition from other programs to Riverwood House. The Network is comprised of organizations who have toured the facility and understand who Riverwood House is, and what it can offer.

“One of the things I say often, is how remarkable and inspiring it was to see all of the other organizations working in this field were so open to sharing what they had learned, their policies and structures and how they approach this work,” says Courtney. “I wondered if there was any sort of competitiveness amongst these organizations, but it was exactly the opposite.”

“One of the key pieces of our vision was to run this facility in a way that created most of the connections for individuals externally, so we’ve tried to develop and hire a staff framework to guide people,” says Courtney. “Our main staff is made up of what we call Navigators (traditionally called Case Managers). What we really want to do is help people navigate to external supports, because when people exit our facility and they’re supported to the level of independent living, the moment they walk out the doors their support network doesn’t just disappear.”

This support network doesn’t only include the traditional criteria that recovery programs typically track, like coping mechanisms and other recovery skills, but also includes a wide array of measurable aspects that contribute to a healthy life. For example, they may ask residents if they have a family doctor, a dentist, connections to community, or a bank account. These types of questions develop a framework that will become sustaining building blocks to a long-lasting recovery.

“If I could paint a picture of what we’re trying to accomplish, that’s the approach we take to recovery,” says Courtney. “The escalating impacts of homelessness and substance abuse have shifted what we do across the board. It’s a different landscape than it used to be. We see it in our emergency systems, we see it everywhere. It’s something we’re all grasping at: how do we get this in check, how do we overcome, how do we achieve success in all these ways without a core housing solution? We know we are one small piece of the solution. We are one sliver of a response, trying to do the best we can to help respond to this need. But the city needs hundreds of similar, and different, solutions in the mix because the demand is overwhelming.”

To learn more about Riverwood House and their programming, visit <https://www.riverwood.house/>

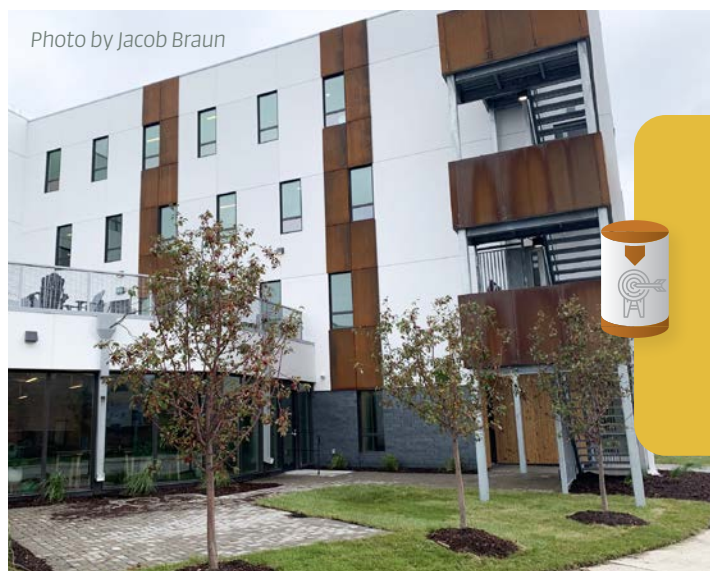


Photo by Jacob Braun



The **Community Impact** Pillar of The Winnipeg Foundation’s Strategic Plan addresses critical issues that have been identified by our community and the Vital Signs® 2022 report. The Foundation has heard that increasing equity in the philanthropic sector and providing additional support to Vital Signs® key findings, such as homelessness, hunger, and addiction, are urgent priorities.

THE LEGACY OF A QUIET PHILANTHROPIST

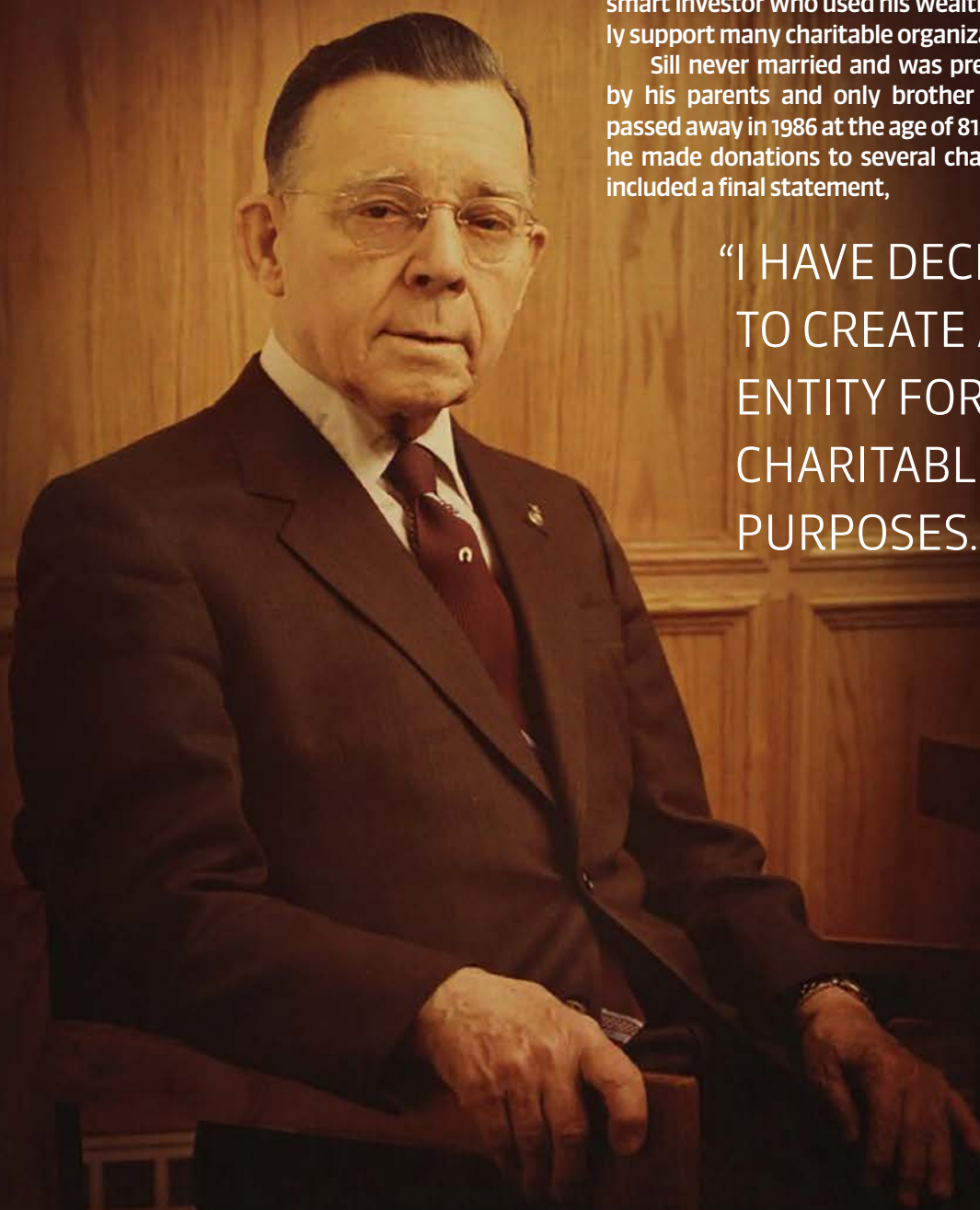
For almost 40 years, the Thomas Sill Foundation quietly supported projects and initiatives in communities across our province, creating a significant impact on Manitoba's charitable sector.

Thomas Sill was born in 1905 and grew up in the Elmwood neighbourhood. He attended St. John's High School and studied to become an accountant, beginning his career articling with the accounting firm Hubert Reade and Company, and eventually becoming a partner. He moved on to become a founding partner of Sill, Streuber, Fiske and Company, the largest independent accounting firm in Manitoba, with offices in Winnipeg, Brandon, Selkirk, Morden, Winkler, and Altona.

Sill was an avid curler who chose to live a simple life, living in an apartment close to his downtown Winnipeg office. Sill was also a smart investor who used his wealth to quietly support many charitable organizations.

Sill never married and was predeceased by his parents and only brother when he passed away in 1986 at the age of 81. In his will he made donations to several charities and included a final statement,

“I HAVE DECIDED
TO CREATE AN
ENTITY FOR
CHARITABLE
PURPOSES.”



THE LEGACY OF A QUIET PHILANTHROPIST (CONTINUED)

The executors of his will, his three firm partners, were given no additional instructions but understood Sill's wishes. They knew how he gave during his lifetime and had suggested to Sill that he create a foundation. The partners established the Thomas Sill Foundation (TSF) in 1987 and it became one of Manitoba's largest private charitable foundations, supporting causes that were important to Sill.

TSF has been an integral part of growing philanthropy in Manitoba. Canada has 201 community foundations, and our province is home to 57 of them, more per capita than any other region in North America.

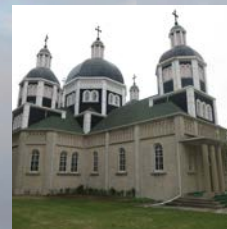
Between 1993 and 2005, the TSF helped to establish or strengthen 19 community foundations across Manitoba by stretching the amount raised by their communities. In total, the foundation awarded more than \$1.9 million to community foundations across the province. In 2015, the TSF supported the community foundation movement in Manitoba again by providing funding to stretch gifts to community foundations. The TSF distributed more than \$1 million to 49 Manitoba community foundations.

The Thomas Sill Foundation also supported special initiatives including partnering with the J. M. Kaplan Fund in New York to preserve historical churches and iconic prairie architecture like grain elevators and railway stations. The TSF took the lead in gathering community foundations to learn about the health of Lake Winnipeg, which impacts four provinces and four states. This project allowed the Thomas Sill Foundation and other foundations to raise more than \$300,000 in support of Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium's research, to better understand how human activity affects the lake and its impact on the drainage area. These initiatives have had a lasting effect in many communities across our province.

Since 1989, the Thomas Sill Foundation has quietly supported charitable organizations and communities across Manitoba, granting more than \$46.6 million.

At the end of 2023, the Thomas Sill Foundation wound down its operations, but the legacy of its namesake will continue. One of TSF's priorities was to help communities across Manitoba grow and prosper.

Thomas Sill Funds were established at community foundations in Brandon, Selkirk, Morden, Winkler, and Altona that will support their communities in perpetuity. Two more funds were established at The Winnipeg Foundation to support Manitoba community foundations that are members of the Endow Manitoba program. The Thomas Sill Manitoba Fund will boost the grant making capacity of our province's community foundations to support programs and projects in communities outside of Winnipeg. The Thomas Sill Development Fund will support the Endow Manitoba program's ongoing efforts to build the capacity of Manitoba's community foundations, ensuring they continue to grow and thrive for generations to come.



1. Inglis Grain Elevators in Inglis, Manitoba.
2. Darlingford Memorial Park in Darlingford, Manitoba.
3. Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Resurrection in Dauphin, Manitoba.
4. Canadian Pacific Railway Station in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.

Photos taken by Gordon Goldsborough, courtesy of the Manitoba Historical Society. Visit their website at mhs.mb.ca

The Boissevain and Morton Foundation was founded in 1974 by a group of six people who wanted to see their town grow and prosper, while giving community-minded citizens a way “to donate to a cause close to their hearts,” says Bob Birch, chair of the community foundation.

Currently, the foundation has two staff, an executive director and an assistant executive director, a 12-person board of directors, and serves residents and non-profit organizations within the Municipality of Boissevain-Morton.

The Boissevain-Morton Municipality is in Southern Manitoba, near the Canada-United States border, and about 30 minutes from Turtle Mountain Provincial Park, a beautiful natural gem studded with lakes, and of course turtles. The town, home to one of the few surviving wooden grain elevators on the prairies, is perhaps best known for its iconic mascot and roadside attraction, Tommy Turtle, a 28-foot fiberglass statue of a western painted turtle. The idea for the statue was hatched by a group of citizens who wanted to promote the town by honouring its proximity to the

park and drawing attention to the region's summer turtle racing event.

The statue was created by Winnipeg sculptor George Barone, and was delivered to its current location in 1974, the same year the town's community foundation came to life, and just two years after Boissevain's inaugural summer turtle race. Since the first race, which was attended primarily by locals, the event has grown into the Canadian Turtle Derby, which sees competitors travel from across Canada and the United States to compete.

Clearly a town with ample community spirit, it's no surprise that the Boissevain and Morton Foundation has assets worth nearly \$5 million and has granted around \$2.5 million back to the community since its incorporation in 1975. Birch says, “We are proud of the impact the foundation has had on our community; the sustainability and growth speaks to the value our residents see.”

According to Birch, the grants offer support for “health, human services, arts and culture, environment, community development and services, education, training, and recreation.” In keeping with trends across both rural and urban centres, the rising cost of goods and services is creating challenges both at home and in non-profit organizations. Birch says, “Many of the organizations and people in our community are feeling the hardships of increasing costs. The costs to offer a program have increased, and as a result, the foundation has seen an increase in the number of applications for grants.”

One program that recently received funding, the Boissevain Food Pantry, is in high demand due to the price of groceries. Birch explains, “The Food Pantry is an essential program in our community... With the higher costs of food and the increased demand for the Food Pantry's services, providing support for the program can help improve the quality of life for people in our community.”

From tackling hunger to dreaming up new ways to bring visitors to the region, the Boissevain and Morton Foundation has been supporting community for nearly 50 years. To learn more about the foundation's work visit <https://boissevainmortonfoundation.ca/>.

BOISSEVAIN AND MORTON FOUNDATION

**SMALL TOWN SPIRIT HAS
BIG COMMUNITY IMPACT**



Photo courtesy of Travel Manitoba.

ENHANCING COMMUNITY WELL-BEING ACROSS THE PROVINCE

ENDOW MANITOBA'S SECOND CONFERENCE
BUILDS CONNECTIONS AND CAPACITY



On a weekend in late April, community foundations from across Manitoba travelled to Winnipeg to learn and grow together at Endow Manitoba's second conference. The provincial conference was attended by 200 volunteers, staff, and board members, representing 45 Manitoba community foundations. It also welcomed special guests from across the country.

Courtney Feldman, Manager of Capacity Building with The Winnipeg Foundation and the conference lead, says, "The passion and enthusiasm of Manitoba community foundation volunteers and staff make this conference special. Each attendee's willingness to engage and share creates a safe and enjoyable place to connect and learn." This sentiment was reflected by the goodwill and camaraderie characterizing the three-day event, which ran from April 19 to 21, and saw groups of dedicated individuals gather to share a passion for community-building.



Courtney Feldman, Manager of Capacity Building with The Winnipeg Foundation and conference lead

"The passion and enthusiasm of Manitoba community foundation volunteers and staff make this conference special. Each attendee's willingness to engage and share creates a safe and enjoyable place to connect and learn."

Endow Manitoba, a program of The Winnipeg Foundation, works to advance the sustainability, growth, and impact of Manitoba's community foundation network. The biennial conference provides an opportunity for staff and volunteers to meet in person and build relationships with other community foundations from regions and communities across Manitoba. Feldman explains that the event "aims to boost the sense of belonging and fortify the Manitoba community foundation network."

Kris Archie, Chief Executive Director of The Circle on Philanthropy (The Circle), gave a keynote address about how community foundation leaders and Indigenous leaders are coming together to build relationships through a shared vision of enhancing community well-being. Sky Bridges, President and CEO of The Winnipeg Foundation, hosted a plenary discussion featuring Archie, Kim Lavallee (Executive Director, Community Foundation of Portage & District), and Chief Maureen Brown (Board Member, The Pas-Tri Community Foundation) about fostering relationships with Indigenous communities.



ENHANCING COMMUNITY WELL-BEING ACROSS THE PROVINCE (CONTINUED)

Manitoba community foundations are predominately operated by volunteer boards, with a small network of staff emerging throughout the province. The number of community foundations across Manitoba has increased exponentially throughout the past decade, creating numerous opportunities for peer-to-peer connection and learning. The conference provides comprehensive and practical sessions to address the needs of community foundations at various stages of growth and development.

The conference's learning approach pairs presenters from different community foundations and allows for plenty of small group discussions, ensuring each session is relevant and tailored to attendees' needs. Michelle Piwniuk, a member of The Endow Manitoba Provincial Advisory Board, a group of 12 volunteers who help guide the program, says the conference provides valuable networking opportunities and highlights the power of peer support. She adds that she wishes the conference "was available when I first joined the network; attending it should almost be a requirement for new board members, and there's also great value in it for more seasoned board members."

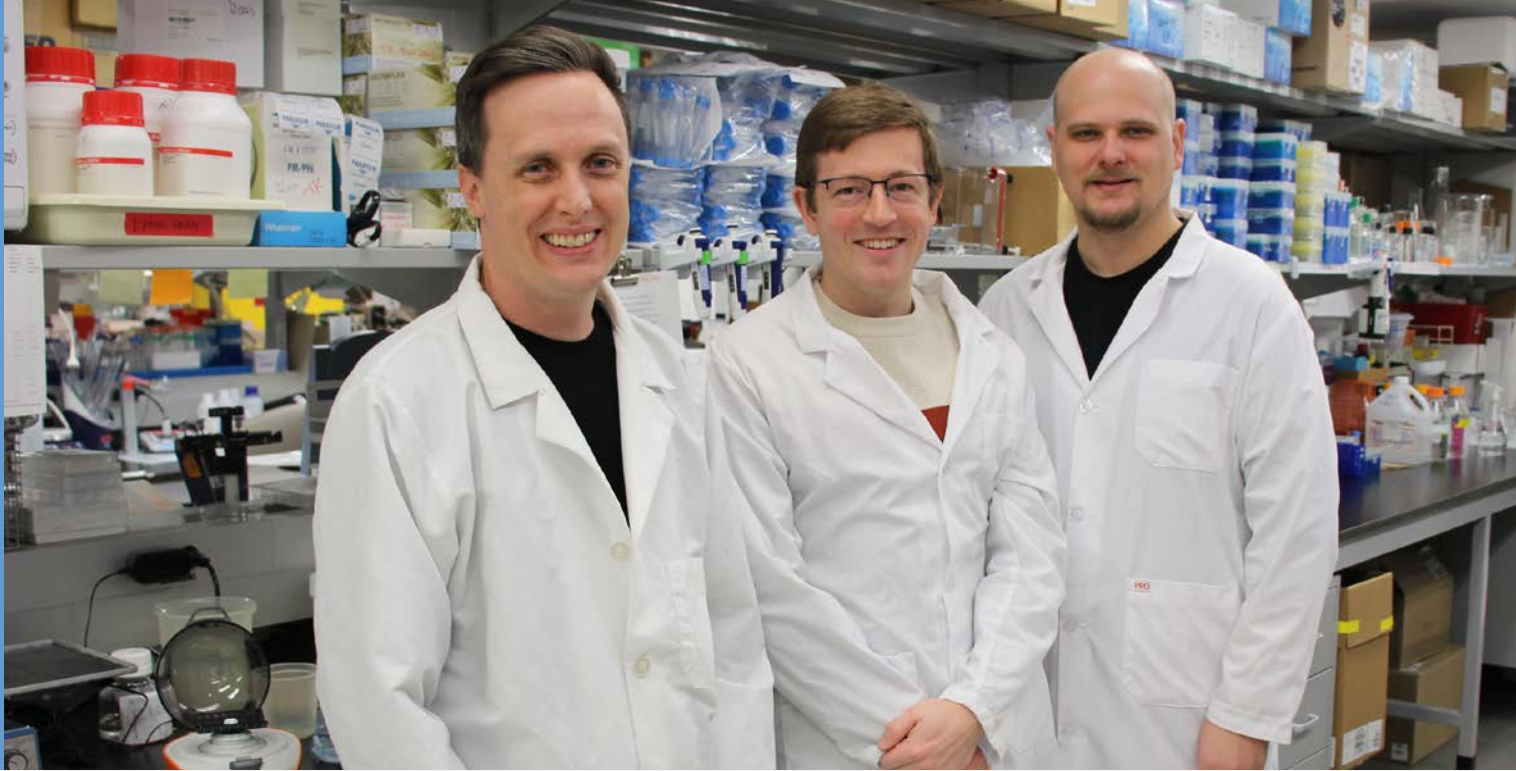
That value is represented by the sharing and growth that took place throughout 28 sessions offered by more than 70 speakers. The sessions covered topics from governance, fund development, and grant making to community engagement and finance, and included immersive learning sessions focused on creative, technical, and administrative skills. In addition to the 28 learning sessions, there were four plenary sessions, including an inspiring conversation on fostering relationships with Indigenous communities.

In addition to learning and sharing skills, there was plenty of time for fun and networking at the conference, with Debbie Majeau, a staff member at Brokenhead River Community Foundation, saying, "having been in the room for ten minutes, I just knew 'these are my people.'"

Feldman, reflecting on the success of the conference, says that the "remarkable turnout, vibrant discussions, and shared ideas have undeniably reinforced connections, showcasing how mutual support fuels the ongoing success and development of community foundations throughout Manitoba."



Above: Conference attendees enjoyed plenty of time for networking and hands-on learning.
Right: The Winnipeg Foundation's Capacity Building and Programs team.



THE WINNIPEG FOUNDATION INNOVATION FUND SUPPORTS CUTTING-EDGE PROJECTS

BY MATTHEW KRUCHAK, RADY FACULTY COMMUNICATIONS, UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Photos courtesy of Rady Faculty Communications, University of Manitoba



Three interdisciplinary teams from the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences have received \$100,000 grants from The Winnipeg Foundation Innovation Fund to pursue leading-edge research in the areas of heart disease, phantom limb pain and Huntington's disease.

The one-year grants are part of The Winnipeg Foundation's \$1-million commitment to support innovative medical research projects at the University of Manitoba.

"The goal of this fund is to bring together cross-disciplinary teams to help launch exciting and innovative research," says Dr. Jude Uzonna, vice-dean, research, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences. "These three projects are excellent examples of the cutting-edge work taking place at the Rady Faculty and the type of research that can be accomplished when we bring together experts from different fields."

VIRTUAL REALITY PHANTOM LIMB PAIN TREATMENT

A team led by Dr. Renée El-Gabalawy, associate professor of clinical health psychology, and anesthesiology, perioperative, and pain medicine at the Max Rady College of Medicine, is using virtual reality (VR) to treat phantom limb pain. The condition, which typically does not respond to standard pain treatments, causes the perception of painful sensations like stabbing, burning, or throbbing in a limb that has been amputated.

The team will be building on its previous research that developed VR technology that incorporated graded motor imagery, a



CUTTING-EDGE PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

technique used to treat chronic pain by retraining the brain. They will also be conducting a clinical trial to evaluate whether the first-of-its-kind VR treatment works.

One stage of graded motor imagery uses an adapted mirror box therapy, in which a patient's limb is simulated to make it look like their missing limb is there. This helps the brain accommodate the missing limb thereby reducing pain signals. In the VR setting, the patient sees themselves with both their limbs as they perform a sequence of exercises with the use of integrated sensor technology.

“THIS FUNDING IS INSTRUMENTAL IN TERMS OF TAKING OUR RESEARCH TO THE NEXT STEP,” EL-GABALAWY SAID. “IF IT’S FOUND TO BE EFFECTIVE, I ENVISION A FUTURE WHERE THIS VR TREATMENT WILL NOT ONLY BE ACCESSIBLE TO PATIENTS IN THE HOSPITAL, BUT ALSO IN THE COMFORT OF THEIR HOMES.”

TEAM STUDIES HUNTINGTON’S DISEASE

Dr. Galen Wright, UM Canada Research Chair in neurogenomics, and assistant professor of pharmacology and therapeutics, and biochemistry and medical genetics, at the Max Rady College of Medicine, heads a project to study the genetic modifiers in Huntington’s disease, an inherited condition that causes the breakdown of nerve cells in the brain.

“Even though we have known the genetic cause of Huntington’s disease for more than 30 years, no effective treatments exist,” Wright said. “This research is innovative because many of the technologies we are using only became available in recent years.”

The team – comprising of experts in human genetics and neuroscience – will take a multifaceted approach throughout this study. The researchers will use innovative techniques to monitor the progression of individual brain cells in animal models. They will also employ an advanced genomic technique, single-cell sequencing, to look at gene expression changes in cell types to understand what’s going on at the disease level.

Wright said Huntington’s disease is among a group of more than 50 diseases caused by genetic mutations known as repeat expansions and most affect the brain. What the team learns from this project could be useful in developing drugs to treat all those diseases, he says.

Co-principal investigators from the Max Rady College of Medicine include Dr. Robert Beattie, assistant professor of biochemistry and medical genetics, and Children’s Hospital Research Institute of Manitoba (CHRIM) researcher, and Dr. Paul Marcogliese, assistant professor of biochemistry and medical genetics, and CHRIM researcher.



USING MULTI-OMICS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO STUDY HEART DISEASE

A study led by Dr. René Zahedi, professor of internal medicine, and biochemistry and medical genetics at the Max Rady College of Medicine, is using multi-omics and artificial intelligence to help better understand calcified aortic valve stenosis. The disease occurs when the heart valve to the main artery doesn’t fully open, resulting in a reduction of blood flow to the body.

“Calcified aortic valve stenosis is the third leading cause of adult heart disease and we don’t really know what’s causing it,” Zahedi said. “The disease has a very complex molecular mechanism, so we want to look at the disease from different perspectives.”

Team members will use their expertise in proteins and lipids to look at what is going wrong in the heart valve on a molecular level and how it can be treated or stopped. They will also work to identify markers in the blood that could detect early stages of the disease or whether someone will develop it.

Zahedi said the cutting-edge aspect of this research will be their use of artificial intelligence to analyze the data. If all goes well, he said the approach they’re taking in this study could be applied in other areas like cancer and chronic disease research.

PALLIATIVE MANITOBA

OFFERS COMFORT THROUGH COMPANIONSHIP

Myrna Eakin is not afraid of death. During the past several years she has kept vigil with nearly a dozen people as they prepare to pass on – all doing so without friends or family to be with them, as the end of their life draws near.

Eakin is a volunteer with Palliative Manitoba's No One Dies Alone Program and Volunteer Visiting Service, both of which aim to provide companionship for people living in palliative care.



Myrna Eakin is a volunteer with Palliative Manitoba's No One Dies Alone Program and Volunteer Visiting Service.

PALLIATIVE MANITOBA (CONTINUED)

"I AM NOT AT ALL FEARFUL OF DEATH," SAYS EAKIN. "I FEEL IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO BE PART OF SOMEONE'S FINAL JOURNEY. THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT IT THAT IS VERY COMFORTING, EVEN IF I HAVE NEVER MET THE CLIENT BEFORE. I BELIEVE IT IS A POSITIVE TOO, FOR THE PATIENTS, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY DON'T HAVE FAMILY THAT CAN BE WITH THEM DURING THEIR FINAL DAYS."

Palliative Manitoba is a volunteer-based organization with a mission to ease the suffering of the dying, the bereaved, and caregivers through supportive services and education. One way the organization does this is through the Volunteer Visiting Service, which matches people living in palliative care with volunteer companions for the remainder of their life.

"Clients are referred by the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority's Palliative Care Program," says Kathleen Williamson, volunteer coordinator of End of Life Services with Palliative Manitoba. She explains that volunteers complete extensive training around compassionate care, a prescreening interview, and rigorous registry and personal reference checks before joining the program and being matched with a client.

Williamson visits each referred client at home to discuss their background, interests, and hobbies, and then matches the client with a volunteer from Palliative Manitoba's database. Once a match is made, the volunteer calls the client and has an initial chat with them to get to know them a bit and ensure they are well matched. The visits that follow are shaped by what the client is interested in and able to do.

"The first visit involves chatting and getting to know the person," says Williamson. "A lot of things can happen during the subsequent visits – puzzles, crafts, reading a series of books to a client. Depending on the interests and abilities of the client, they may go shopping, visit the zoo or The Leaf and get out of the apartment for a while."

There is a myriad of benefits provided by the program – it can help lessen feelings of loneliness, offer support for clients and their family members, assist with outings, and allow caregivers short breaks. Williamson says matches can last anywhere from a couple of weeks to a few years.

"The palliative process is unpredictable, but the program is meaningful for both parties," says Williamson. "Both volunteers and clients talk about how it has really enriched their life. They look forward to the visit every week, and oftentimes they become really close."

While volunteers with the Volunteer Visiting Service may have weeks, months, or years with their client, the No One Dies Alone program provides companionship for people who are expected to die within 48 to 72 hours, and who don't have friends or family available to be with them.

"We really feel like it's important for someone to be able to be with the person as they are dying, just to be a calm, supportive presence, which can make a difference to people who might not have anyone to be beside them as they pass away," says Williamson. She explains that the dying process is different for everyone, and that people are at different stages when they are referred.

"Someone could be awake and aware, others – we aren't sure what they hear or feel. Hearing is the last thing to go, and oftentimes our volunteers will play some music, read, or talk to them quietly."

Eakin loves to play music for the people she keeps vigil with.

"If I can establish their taste in music, I would play accordingly. Otherwise I would choose songs based on their age," says Eakin. "I will often try to communicate with the patients, no matter their level of consciousness. Sometimes just talking about personal items in the patient's room can help to lead a conversation."

Williamson says that family members of those participating in the No One Dies Alone program are very appreciative, and often so are the staff in the palliative wards, who have found that when people are agitated, having someone sit with them is very calming.

"They are compassionate people and they appreciate when someone is able to sit with the person [for an extended period of time.]"

Eakin says she thinks everybody should have the experience of volunteering with someone in palliative care.

"I walk in there with a smile on my face, and I leave with a smile on my face, because I believe I'm giving the client some quality time. It's not gross, it's a natural thing. It's relaxing, and it's rewarding. We're all going to have to bury someone – it's part of life."

The Winnipeg Foundation supported the No One Dies Alone program with a One-time Community Grant in 2023.

To learn more about the program head to <https://palliativemanitoba.ca/>.



The **Community Impact** Pillar of The Winnipeg Foundation's Strategic Plan addresses critical issues that have been identified by our community and the Vital Signs® 2022 report. The Foundation has heard that increasing equity in the philanthropic sector and providing additional support to Vital Signs® key findings, such as homelessness, hunger, and addiction, are urgent priorities.

Promising Projects

The Community Impact (formerly Grants) team shares a few exciting initiatives that were included in the 157 grants announced in January 2024.

Seine River

Holistic Ongoing Opportunities Development-Facilitation and Management Services (HOODFAMS)

GRANT **\$30,000**

The Holistic Ongoing Opportunities Development-Facilitation and Management Services Inc. (HOODFAMS) is a black-led, grassroots organization dedicated to serving newcomer youth who are at risk of gang and justice involvement. The grant supports HOODFAMS' criminal justice support program, designed to address the specific needs of vulnerable newcomer youth in Manitoba. The program includes justice system advocacy, social services system literacy and navigation, public legal education, legal advice, and tailored prevention supports.

Vision of Independence

GRANT **\$40,000**

Vision of Independence, in collaboration with Abilities Manitoba, received support to create a training program to enhance the skills of employees and organizations within Manitoba's intellectual disability service sector. The project addresses unprecedented challenges organizations are facing, such as soaring staff vacancy rates, high turnover, and severe staff burnout. The goal is to strengthen the workforce and improve quality of life for individuals with intellectual disabilities in Winnipeg.

Manitoba Harm Reduction Network

GRANT **\$52,000**

This grant supports the development and delivery of harm reduction training to local non-profit agencies that are not health based. Non-profit workers are facing an increasing number of people experiencing a drug poisoning in their space, on their property, or in their neighbourhood. They are doing their best to respond to the crisis but have little to no training on how to recognize an overdose or how to administer naloxone. The goal of this training is to reduce the stress and burnout for employees who are providing life-saving services.

Winnipeg Indigenous Friendship Centre

GRANT **\$40,000**

The Winnipeg Indigenous Friendship Centre (WIFC) received a grant for short-term operating support as it transitions into being a stand-alone organization. In recent years, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre and several other organizations have worked together to restore and revive the Centre. Friendship Centres have provided gathering spaces in Manitoba, and throughout Canada, since the 1950s, and are a fundamental aspect of urban Indigenous community building. The new WIFC will include meeting space and a residence for Elders and will offer crucial programs and support for community members.

Save our Seine River Environment

GRANT **\$35,000**

The Urban Restoration and Enhancement Initiative is a multi-faceted approach to restoration and conservation along the 26 kilometres of Winnipeg's Seine River. The Seine winds its way across the city through numerous neighbourhoods, providing a sanctuary for wildlife and an opportunity for Winnipeggers to connect with nature. The Initiative involves community partners and the public through education, awareness, innovative natural solutions, and hands-on engagement in citizen science with a goal of improving water quality, biodiversity, and stewardship.

Winnipeg School Division, Clinical Support Services

GRANT **\$17,874**

The Winnipeg School Division is creating inclusive spaces for students by installing playground communication boards in Meadows West, River Elm, and Wolseley Schools. The boards present different images, symbols, and letters so children with limited verbal ability can communicate with peers, caregivers, and teachers by pointing to, or touching, the image that represents their needs or experience. The project increases inclusion and belonging, creating an interactive playground experience for children who may otherwise feel isolated.

A GLIMPSE INTO OUR CITY'S PAST WITH THE WINNIPEG ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION

IF WINNIPEG WALLS COULD TALK

As a 150-year-old city, Winnipeg has a rich history, much of which can be told through the buildings that line our streets. In the early and mid 1900s, Winnipeg experienced two distinct periods of growth that paralleled the rapid development of the 'Windy City;' the similarities are striking enough that Winnipeg was often referred to as the 'Chicago of the North.'

Inspired by what the Chicago Architecture Foundation accomplished for its community, the Winnipeg Architecture Foundation (WAF) was created to celebrate our city's past and let the buildings tell the story.



WAF celebrates our city's past by offering tours, lectures, exhibits, and an annual festival. Photos courtesy of the Winnipeg Architecture Foundation.



Susan Algie, board director and one of the six founding members of the Winnipeg Architecture Foundation (WAF), is a nationally renowned architect and author who has been involved with WAF since 1996. “We decided that we would form a small non-profit and really take on the mandate of trying to educate the public about architecture,” says Algie. “Particularly from the post Second World War period, but not exclusively.”

WAF, a registered charity, has an extensive publishing and archival program and hosts the annual Architecture+Design Film Festival, different exhibits, lectures, talks, tours, and scavenger hunts. Algie explains that the tours are “a great way of engaging people. I think there is an appetite to learn about the city. There’s an appetite to learn about specific buildings, and of course, anytime we can go into a building, people really enjoy that because we all want to see what’s behind the front door.”

The tours, some available in ten different languages and ASL, don’t just attract history and architecture buffs, they are also a way for newcomers to learn about Winnipeg. Algie notes that people for whom English is a second, third, or even fourth language are attending tours, saying, “We really take a lot of joy in not just reaching those people that you think would come to an architecture tour.”

Algie, who remains involved in WAF, recently handed over the reins to a new Executive Director, Marieke Gruwel, who has been involved with the organization for eight years. Gruwel took on a research contract with WAF when she was an undergraduate student and loved it so much, she kept coming back.

“It is our mandate to create interesting programming that’s accessible so all people can engage with it,” says Gruwel.

At this point, WAF is run solely by Algie and Gruwel with assistance from an intern. “We have been contacted by people in other cities asking, ‘how do you do it?’ And we like to say that Winnipeg is special... Nowhere in the country is anybody doing the research, the programming, and the archival work,” says Algie. “We feel very proud about that.”

Gruwel adds, “We can’t keep doing this without the support of donors.”

WAF is currently offering a range of engaging and innovative tours, including Archi10, which is a self-guided app-based tour that is synchronized with Winnipeg transit’s route #10. Gruwel explains that as you ride the number ten bus, you listen to “a bilingual narrative that tells you a bit about the buildings you are passing and plays original music by Jason Tate and Julie Penner that will take you through the entire bus ride in one hour.”

WAF also offers QR code-based tours; participants scan QR decals that have been placed on buildings and landmarks to access information, making for a fun interactive experience. WAF also provides digital tours on their website.

The Winnipeg Foundation supports WAF’s innovative tours with a grant through The Centennial Institute, a legacy initiative created by The Foundation to celebrate its 100th anniversary. Centennial Institute Grants help tell previously untold stories, preserve knowledge of the past, and assist community agencies in addressing the challenge of moving from the past to the future.

To learn more about the Winnipeg Architecture Foundation, visit their website at winnipegarchitecture.ca and watch out for their upcoming publication, Winnipeg’s first architectural guidebook, which will be released later this year.



WAF tours shares Winnipeg history through architecture. Photos courtesy of the Winnipeg Architecture Foundation.

HOLY NAMES HOUSE OF PEACE



The **Community Generosity** Pillar supports the continued generosity of Manitobans through connecting donors and community. Growing unrestricted funds, such as our Community Fund, increasing diversity within our donor base, and championing generosity throughout the province will help solve our most urgent and long-term priorities.

Sister Lesley Sacouman, founder of Holy Names House of Peace.

Twenty years ago, in 2004, Sister Lesley Sacouman took a giant leap of faith and founded Holy Names House of Peace, an organization dedicated to providing a safe and loving place for newcomer women.

The then co-director of Rossbrook House had spent her life in service, to and with others. Rossbrook provides a safe place for kids to be kids; the drop-in centre offers programming, supports, and a place to 'be' based on its founding premise of "No child who does not want to be alone, should ever have to be".

At that time, Sr Lesley was looking for her next inspiration and sign of *divine guidance*, when in her role as a member of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary Order, she had the opportunity to spend time living – and learning – in a women's shelter in New York City.

After a few months at the shelter, Sr Lesley returned to Winnipeg full of inspiration and energy from the experience, but unsure how to use it. The collective work of The Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary Order is as educators who are dedicated to empowering impoverished and marginalized people. Active on three continents, they focus mainly on refugees and migrants, human trafficking, and access to clean water.

After her experience in NYC, Sr Lesley knew she wanted to do something to support newcomer women. As ideas started to formulate, she was unsure how or where resources might materialize to pursue her plans, but knew she had to keep moving forward and trust the path ahead would become clearer.

"When we started House of Peace, there were two of us; we had no paid staff, no clear picture of what we were doing, but knew we had to continue. We had a very generous landlord that gave us a few months of free rent of the space (on Edmonton Avenue) to help us get organized and figure out our next steps," she explains.

The other person who worked with Sr Lesley to start Holy Names House of Peace was Sr Vera who stayed for the first decade of the not-for-profit organization's operation. It is an intercultural, life-affirming refuge in the heart of Winnipeg that welcomes all and provides a safe home for newcomer women in transition.

The original facility provided enough space to house seven newcomer women. At House of Peace, 'neighbours' can stay for up to two years in a warm, caring and home-like atmosphere. The organization provides a steady and reliable anchor for residents as they get on with building or rebuilding their lives in Winnipeg.

Along with providing a warm and welcoming home, House of Peace initiates activities and programs that enhance self-confidence and interdependence. It promotes education and skills training, encourages mentorship, collaboration, and leadership, and helps create networks and build relationships. It also collaborates with organizations that focus on healing and reconciliation.

The home has approximately 50 volunteers a month, involved in everything from hospitality, finance, driving, and shopping, to tutoring, building maintenance, cooking, and leadership.

In 2009, overwhelmed by the suffering of immigrant and refugee women, the House of Peace initiated a capital campaign, "ONward and UPward," and as a result, in 2012 was able to triple its original capacity, providing even more safe and supportive spaces for newcomer women.

In 2011, the House of Peace received The Red Cross Power of Humanity Award for its bold and innovative leadership in the community. In 2013, the House of Peace helped launch Marie Rose Place, which consists of 40, two-bedroom apartments for newcomer women and children, right next door to House of Peace on Edmonton Avenue. In 2018, the Institute for International Women's Rights, Manitoba honoured the House of Peace at its Local to Global event: Women at the Heart of Peace.

In 2022 House of Peace launched another capital campaign, "Beyond Bricks," which was such a major success, it raised enough resources that House of Peace now owns its building. The bricks and mortar include an expansive living area for neighbours and a large chapel that is used by many Winnipeggers – not just those that live onsite. The building also has a bevy of offices and meeting rooms, along with quiet spaces for prayer and contemplation. The organization has grown to a size that it now has seven paid staff.

As Sr. Lesley prepared to retire from her role (end of March 2024) after two decades at the helm, she reflects on her time at House of Peace.

"The first paid staff at House of Peace was our cook – who is still here today, keeping us all well fed. To date, 187 'neighbours' have come through House of Peace and have made their own lives beyond our walls. House of Peace has four floors of 'home' for people and Winnipeg has supported us extensively. Many, many folks have donated goods and resources to House of Peace; it is people's home and is treated by everyone here like a home."

What's next for Sr Lesley? At the time of this writing, she was a bit vague about her next steps in the realm of community service but did suggest she is not prepared to 'just sit around doing nothing.'

An inspirational community leader, Sr. Lesley lives by the dynamic principles which embolden the House of Peace – which are to "Leap and trust that the net will unfold."

Effective April 1, 2024 the House of Peace's new Director is Rosalinda Amato, who had been a volunteer at the House of Peace since 2015. She has had a 23-year career in the Winnipeg School Division teaching English as an Additional Language and has extensive volunteer experience at many Winnipeg organizations.

Sr. Lesley served on the Board of Directors of The Winnipeg Foundation from 2002-2016.

MOFFAT FAMILY FUND SURPASSES GRANTING MILESTONE



From top right: The Moffat family during a site visit to Art City in September 2023; Angeline Spence (centre) and family in 2017 participating in Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre's Family Group Conferencing program; Children at Manidoo Gi Miini Gonaan learn with Moe the Mouse®, an element of Very READ-y, in 2014; Pg 45: Students at Dufferin School in 2005, which was the hub of the Centennial Neighbourhood Project; Members of the Merchants Corner Steering Committee, Dr. Jim Silver and Kathy Mallett, in front of the building under construction in 2017.

December 2001 was a pivotal moment for The Winnipeg Foundation and our community when the Moffat Family made a gift of \$100 million – the largest donation to a Canadian community foundation, at that time.

“This gift is our family’s way of putting something back into the communities that have been instrumental in our success. We wanted to do it in a way where we can see tangible results in improved lives and realized potential for children and their families who have not had the same good fortune and opportunities that my family and I have enjoyed.” Moffat said during the announcement in 2001.

The gift established the Moffat Family Fund, a donor advised fund, to support children and families in Winnipeg, and a dozen additional communities across Canada where Moffat Communications had operated. The family’s vision is “a Canadian society where all individuals have equal opportunities to develop their potential,” and the focus of their grant making is on supporting the economic, social, physical, and intellectual well-being of children and families.

Over the past 22 years hundreds of charitable organizations have received grants from the Moffat Family Fund, changing the landscape of the sector and the lives of the people they serve. In September 2023 grants from the Moffat Family Fund surpassed their original gift of \$100 million.

The Moffat family works with Foundation staff to direct grants from their fund, both through The Foundation’s grant programs and by identifying initiatives that align with their vision. This collaborative relationship has led to new and innovative ways to address the challenges in our community. One of the first initiatives, the Teachers’ Discretionary Grants Program, was launched in 2002 to provide teachers at inner city schools with the funds to meet the needs of their students. Grants have been used for a wide variety of purposes such as providing healthy snacks and clothing, covering field trip costs, helping students get their identification, and much more.

Megan Tate, Vice President of Community Impact, has worked with the Moffat family since their fund was established. “It has been such a joy to work with the family, to be able to connect them to the amazing work of organizations in our community, and to see first-hand the lives that have been changed by their generosity.”

A grants to Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre’s Family Group Conferencing program provided supports to families engaged in the child welfare system, reuniting parents with their children and keeping families together. A long-term commitment to the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba supported healthy food and meal programs in schools to ensure better outcomes for students.

The fund also contributed to many capital projects throughout our city. Most notable are the many along Selkirk Avenue including the construction of the William Norrie Centre and the transformation of Merchants Hotel into Merchants Corner.

Two of the many Foundation initiatives the Moffat Family Fund inspired and supported are Centennial Neighbourhood Project, a multifaceted project from 2003-2008 focused on education, neighbourhood safety and housing and the Very READ-y Project, a partnership with Bookmates, Manidoo Gi Miini Gonaan that focused on building literacy, speech, numeracy and social skills among preschoolers.

In 2018, the Moffat Family contributed an additional \$50 million to their fund, increasing their capacity to support additional innovative strategies such as the Financial Empowerment Cohort and 24/7 Safe Spaces for Youth.

The Financial Empowerment Cohort brings together community partners with the goal of reducing poverty. Community Financial Counselling Services, SEED Winnipeg and other organizations provide a range of supports to low-income individuals and families, including financial education, information on benefits and how to access them, and assistance in filing their taxes. Through these supports, program participants are able to boost their income with tax credits and benefits, like rent assistance.

The 24/7 Safe Spaces for Youth Strategy was established to support young people facing homelessness, many who feel uncomfortable and unsafe accessing adult shelters. Grants to Rossbrook House, Spence Neighbourhood Association, and Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad allowed these community spaces to extend their hours providing a place for youth to stay overnight, as well as food and access to mental health and harm reduction resources.

Organizations participating in each strategy are working together, learning from each other, and adapting their programs to better understand and address the needs in our community.

The Moffat family’s commitment to making a tangible difference to improve the lives of children and families will continue to have a tremendously positive impact on our community.



MEET YOUR COMMUNITY GENEROSITY TEAM!



Mary Beth Taylor, CFRE,
Vice President of Community Generosity

Mary Beth leads the community generosity team and is responsible for the Community Generosity Pillar in The Foundation's Strategic Plan.

Mary Beth has committed her life to promoting generosity. She has more than 30 years of experience in the charitable sector, including leadership positions at World Wildlife Fund Canada and the Sunnybrook & Women's Foundation. An active community volunteer, she serves on several boards and committees, including her son's school's parents' advisory group. Her best role is being Daniel's Mom.



Niña Bayona,
Relationship Management Coordinator

Niña has a keen eye for detail and dedication to data accuracy.

Niña has years of experience in data management and extraction. Though she is new to the non-profit sector, she believes that her work has a deep sense of purpose. She understands that working together and utilizing the power of generosity can create a more equitable and compassionate community for all. Niña enjoys spending time with her husband and 2 kids and is an avid fan of The Beatles and Star Wars.



Rebecca Brask,
Senior Generosity Advisor

Rebecca leads Strategic Generosity programming, working with families, professional advisors, and corporations.

Rebecca has spent the past two decades in the not-for-profit sector. She values the opportunity to contribute to the well-being of our community and is inspired daily by the generosity of Manitobans. Rebecca holds a degree in English and Theatre from the University of Winnipeg and loves to read. She is the proud mom of two kids and two dogs and loves spending time with her partner, family, and friends, especially at the lake.



Stacy Cardigan Smith, MPNL, CFRE,
Manager of Generosity Planning

Stacy leads our team of Generosity Advisors, working to help donors achieve their generosity goals.

Stacy believes community philanthropy can bring lasting, positive change when aligned with community needs. A member of The Winnipeg Foundation team for more than a decade, she is passionate about the nonprofit sector, earning a master's degree in Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership (MPNL) from Carleton University in 2021. Along with her husband and two children, Stacy aspires to live a happy, healthy life.



David Drake,
Generosity Advisor

David works with donors to achieve their generosity goals, with a focus on managing relationships.

David is one of the newer members of our team, having spent nearly three decades in radio broadcasting. His media travels took him across Canada and overseas, but Manitoba will always be home. David has long had a passion for helping others and is honoured to assist you in meeting your philanthropic goals. David enjoys travelling, the arts, architecture, photography, and spending time with his two corgis who manage to take up most of his spare time.



Maligne Esposito,
Stewardship Coordinator

Maligne supports donors by processing gifts, assisting with tax receipts, and facilitating communication.

Maligne hails from northern Alberta but has called Winnipeg home for the past seven years. While she misses the mountains, she insists that Winnipeggers are the friendliest folks in Canada. She has worked in the not-for-profit sector for six years, most recently with the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba Inc.. In her free time, Maligne enjoys reading, writing, travelling, and exploring the outdoors.



Matthew Gardner,
Generosity Advisor

Matthew works with donors to achieve generosity goals, with a focus on strategic relationship development.

Matthew is a life-long resident of Winnipeg and is passionate about our city's communities and culture. He joined The Foundation in January and is honoured to work with its generous donors. Matthew previously worked as a financial advisor and as the director of partnerships for a local tech start-up; his favourite part of work is the people. Matthew enjoys experiencing the city through its music, restaurants, art, and sports.



Patricia Hrymack, CFRE,
Planned Giving Advisor

Patricia works with donors to achieve their generosity goals, with a focus on planned and estate giving.

Patricia values working with generous people in our community while learning about their interests and providing meaningful giving options. Her journey with The Foundation began in 2009. Patricia is currently responsible for a diverse portfolio of donors including legacy giving and managing the Will and Estates program. Patricia enjoys spending time with her family, travelling, and maintaining an active lifestyle.



Jaime Kyle,
Generosity Advisor

Jaime works with donors to achieve their generosity goals, with a focus on the community grants program.

Jaime is inspired daily by the care and generosity expressed by donors for our community. She joined The Winnipeg Foundation team in 2016 and became a Generosity Advisor in 2019. Jamie enjoys working with donors and learning about what moves them to give to the causes they care about. She likes spending winter days curling, summer days in a hammock listening to music, and any day spending time with friends and family.



Dianne Maendel,
Community Generosity Coordinator

Dianne is likely one of the first people you'll speak with at The Foundation! She processes gifts, manages fund reporting, and lots more!

Dianne is in a unique position to connect with donors regularly to answer questions about gifts and how The Foundation supports community. She is inspired by the continuous generosity of donors. Dianne enjoys cooking and volunteers as a Volunteer Community Nutrition Education through WRHA. As a strong believer that everyone should have a hot meal at least once a day, her endowment supports Agape Table.



Samarah McRorie,
Generosity Advisor

Samarah works with donors to achieve their generosity goals, with a focus on engaging the next generation.

Continuously inspired by Manitoba's spirit of generosity, Samarah has had the privilege of pursuing a career centered around community. She is passionate about volunteering and serves on the Association of Fundraising Professionals Manitoba Chapter Board as the Professional Development Co-Chair. A born and raised Manitoban, and a University of Winnipeg alumni, Samarah is a proud Winnipegger committed to ensuring our shared community 'flourishes for all.'



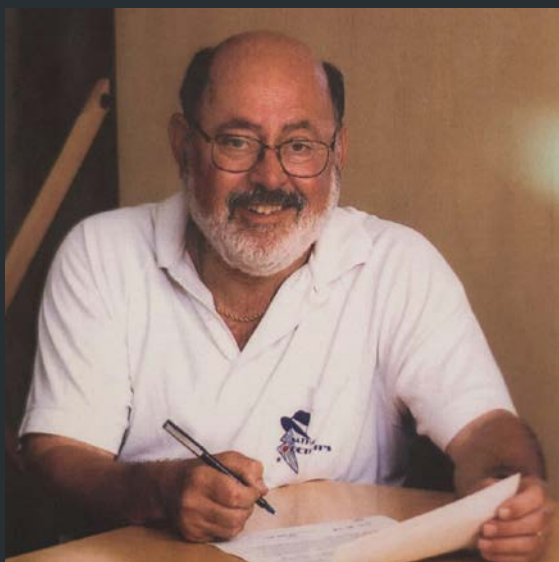
Jennifer M. Walton, CFRE,
Manager of Stewardship & Operations

Jennifer leads our annual and planned giving programs and oversees all things "behind the scenes."

Since her first summer job at the Manitoba Museum in 1991, Jennifer has dedicated her entire career to Winnipeg's non-profit sector. She joined The Foundation in 2021, after a decade leading the University of Manitoba's Research & Prospect Management team. Jennifer spent ix years as Principal Pianist for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's Professional Division and is an avid trailrunner, passionate football fan, and accidental ukulele collector.

Currently on leave: Raquel Bracken, Generosity Advisor

A CULTURE OF GENEROSITY IS PASSED DOWN THROUGH GENERATIONS



Ian Yamron, a first generation Canadian, was known for his generosity and contributions to community.

Brenlea Yamron has carried on the generosity of her parents and grandparents and is inspiring her daughter to do the same, saying, “My sister and I grew up always knowing that you had to give back.”

Yamron and her family ran Nathan Detroit’s Sandwich Pad for more than 40 years; a family owned and operated business that closed in 2022. The pandemic drastically reduced the amount of foot-traffic at Portage and Main, including the Richardson Building’s Concourse, where the restaurant was located.

Brenlea’s father, Ian, a first generation Canadian who passed away in 2001, had an influence on Brenlea and her sister Karen that persists to this day; no matter what happens in the world, you should wake up in the morning with a smile on your face.

“My dad was ill and the city rallied for him. He was the first patient to have deep-brain implant surgery for Parkinsons, here in Manitoba,” says Yamron. “That couldn’t have happened without philanthropy, which couldn’t have happened without giving back.”

Yamron, a born and raised Winnipegger, is a loud and proud supporter of the city and a variety of causes. The point, says Yamron, is to instill the values of generosity in the next generation, and in her daughter.

“We started at Winnipeg Harvest when she was old enough to pick through potatoes,” says Yamron. “She’s grown up doing, and knowing, and being a part of something bigger than ourselves.”

“People say ‘how do you influence?’ You influence by doing. Generosity is an expectation, it’s not a demand.”

Yamron started practicing generosity at a very young age and was inspired by the Muscular Dystrophy telethons hosted by Jerry Lewis in the ‘60s and ‘70s. She donated to the cause as a child, and once her daughter was old enough, would do lemonade and iced tea stands in summer, with the proceeds going to pet rescues.

“Our parents taught us, and our grandparents taught them, and we’re teaching my daughter what it means to be generous. It’s an expectation. It’s not a hard conversation, it just is.”

“Generosity is giving of yourself. It’s helping a friend in need. But, what about helping someone you don’t know who’s in need?” says Yamron. “Community is about us all being there and being a part of each other’s lives; when it’s good, we’re there for each other, and when it’s bad, we’re there for each other. That’s what community is for me.”

From the desk of...



Cecilly Hildebrand

Executive Director of Candace House

In 1984, a 13-year-old girl named Candace Derkson went missing in Winnipeg. This sparked one of the largest city-wide searches in Winnipeg's history. Nearly two months later, Candace's body was found in a shack. In 2011, a suspect was identified and found guilty of second-degree murder. While Candace's mother Wilma was going through the trial, she realized there was no safe, comfortable place for victims, survivors, and loved ones to rest, recuperate, and receive nourishment and information.

So, the idea for Candace House was born. Cecilly Hildebrand is the founding executive director of Candace House, a first-of-its-kind organization. She started on this journey with the Derkson family 10 years ago. In 2013, the organization received charitable status, and opened to help the first family in 2018. Since opening, Hildebrand and her team have worked with over 1,500 people in connection with 140 homicides.

"It just started off as families going to trial - where are they going to go? They don't want to be in court. They don't want to see what's going on. You can't have coffee, you can't cry, you can't smudge, you can't talk, there's all these rules," says Hildebrand from her offices at 183 Kennedy Street, in downtown Winnipeg.

"So, we started with the space. Then we needed food. Then we realized families needed support earlier on, immediately after a homicide occurs, and they're communicating with investigators and Crown Attorneys. As more time has gone by, it has created more unique opportunities to provide trauma-informed support to families in any way they need."

Hildebrand and her team recently doubled Candace House's space to provide even more emotional and physical comfort and support for families from across Manitoba. These families, who have suffered a profound and traumatic loss, are uprooted from their home communities to come to Winnipeg and participate in the criminal justice system for homicide and violent crime. It is an exhausting process for anyone, but especially for someone who is grieving. Candace House's mission is to provide safe and comforting refuge for those navigating the difficult and often re-traumatizing court process.

"We're working in a system that we don't have any control over. But there are little things we can affect, through caring and through compassion. We're empowering families and creating that space for them to say 'these are my needs, these are my rights, I do matter, I have a voice and I can use it,' and they can have the courage and the strength to do what they need to do for their healing."

Hildebrand knows this work is exhausting and can be traumatizing and has put safeguards in place for herself and staff so they can continue serving families long-term.

"It's hard work. You see a lot of darkness. You see a lot of challenges and complexities. You see a lot of pain everywhere," says Hildebrand. "But I love my work. I can't imagine not doing it. And part of wanting to be in this work is being mindful of burnout. So, setting good boundaries and demonstrating what that looks like for my staff: what does self-care look like, how do we enshrine policies where [self-care] is required. We cover therapy. It's required to go to therapy and your time is paid while you go. We have group check-ins to see where people are at. It's about building a healthy culture."

To learn more about Candace House or to contribute to their cause, visit <https://www.candacehouse.ca/>



The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Bentwood Box. The box, which was created by Coast Salish artist Luke Marsten, travelled with the TRC throughout Canada, where people placed personal items representative of their journey to healing and expressions of reconciliation.