



Western
FINANCIAL GROUP

Communities Foundation

Report of Community Giving

2022



Western Financial Group is headquartered in High River, Alberta.

Alberta is the traditional and ancestral territory of many peoples, presently subject to Treaties 6, 7, and 8. Namely: the Blackfoot Confederacy – Kainai, Piikani, and Siksika – the Cree, Dene, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, Stoney Nakoda, and the Tsuu T’ina Nation and the Métis People of Alberta.

We respect the treaties that were made on these territories, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.



THANK YOU SPONSORS

Grand National - \$50K



Advocate - \$10K



National - \$30K



Promotor - \$5K



Partner - \$25K



Supporter - \$2K



Proud supporter of the Western Communities Foundation

Speak to your broker, or visit intact.ca to find out more

®Intact Insurance Design is a registered trademark of Intact Financial Corporation used under licence.
©2023 Intact Insurance Company. All rights reserved.



Making communities safe
and secure together

sgicanada.ca

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Director	2	Community Infrastructure Grants	14
Our Leaders	3	Matthews House Hospice	14
How We Give Back	4	Doane House Hospice	16
Winnipeg United Way	6		
Western Inspirational Award	7	Goal Achiever & Matching Grant Program	18
Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal	8	Estevan Public Youth Centre	18
Community Feature - Fort St. John	10		
Child Development Centre Society	10	Western Fitness Challenge	19
Ma Murray Community School	11		
Doig River First Nation	12		

The Western Financial Group Communities Foundation had a great year of giving back to our communities in 2022, with many of our events transitioning back to in-person. Since the beginning, caring for our local communities has guided all our actions, and we want to continue to invest in and support the communities where we proudly live, work and play. We are proud community builders and look forward to highlighting the many wonderful achievements we've accomplished together.

As we shook off the remnants of virtual fundraising events, I am humbled that so many of our communities were able to safely resume their bake sales and barbecues, while others were able to attend high school graduations to present students with their awards in person. We also celebrated a record number of Infrastructure Grants, with all 68 applicants approved!

OVER \$5 MILLION GIVEN BACK

We are grateful for the continued funding and backing from Western Financial Group and our corporate sponsors. We could not make an impact in our communities without it. Most notably, we received a generous \$50,000 donation from our partners at Optiom, contributing to our grand total of \$190,200 in corporate donations toward our charitable efforts.

~**Laurette LaPlante, Director**
Western Financial Group Communities Foundation





Craig Kozlowski



Nancy Green-Bolton



Scott Tannas



Mark Rouleau



Grant Ostir



Kristy Rachkowski



Kenny Nicholls



Lisa Colangelo

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

This year, we welcomed Kristy Rachkowski, our Chief People & Culture Officer, Craig Kozlowski, our Chief Information Officer and Lisa Colangelo, our Chief Customer Experience Officer to the team. With the new additions, the board put their heads together to map out a strategy for the Foundation moving forward. It will be an exciting few years ahead.

I look forward to a new and exciting 2023, where we work together to support our communities and those in need through fundraising events that bring us closer together. I am proud of all we have achieved together and I look forward to 2023 being our best year yet!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "LaPlante".

~Laurette LaPlante, Director
Western Financial Group Communities
Foundation

2022 GIVING BREAKDOWN



Good Heart Day

917 hours
137 dedicated
Western volunteers



National Walk to Support the Cause

1,490 employees walked
to raise funds for Support
the Cause volunteers



Infrastructure Grants

Record number of all 68
applications approved
Five grants supported our
Indigenous Communities

Notable Donations

\$100,000
donation to Red Cross for people of
Ukraine rebuilding their lives in Canada

\$526,842

Total Charitable Dollars Donated

Returning to in-person events

Our transition back to in-person events allowed us to finally gather together for our 19th Annual Fall Classic Golf Tournament after a two-year hiatus. Despite some weather challenges, our spirits were high and the pleasure of seeing our supporters, friends and colleagues was energizing.

We are pleased that so many of our sponsors support our Foundation through their participation in this tournament. A special thanks go out to our sponsors for helping us raise \$38,700, including \$9,000 through our silent auction.

Notable Donations

One of the most notable initiatives in 2022 was our commitment to the Red Cross in support of Ukrainian refugees. In partnership with Western Financial Group, we were honoured to contribute \$100,000 to support the Ukrainian refugees arriving in Canada with little more than the clothes on their backs. You can read more about that project in the pages ahead.

In 2021, we introduced the Foundation's new Indigenous Infrastructure Grant. We are happy to report that five infrastructure grant projects were allotted to Indigenous communities, and a record 14 Inspirational Awards were granted to Indigenous students to help them pursue educational opportunities.

Supporting Local Communities

Optiom is proud to partner with Western Financial Group to support their charitable efforts and shared vision to have a positive impact on the communities served.



OPTIOM

Turbocharge Your Car Insurance

Learn more on our website at [Optiom.com](https://www.Optom.com)

WINNIPEG UNITED WAY

Western team members raise \$97,000 to support the Winnipeg community

United Way Winnipeg is an organization committed to making Winnipeg a better place for all residents by investing in the most effective local programs to change lives.

Our Winnipeg team of 23 committee members raised over \$90,000 in total donations for the Annual United Way Campaign to raise money and awareness for the causes surrounding the Winnipeg area, including a \$5,400 contribution raised by our local Western Financial Group and Wyatt Dowling branches.

*Not only did we have all 14 Winnipeg branches participate, but both Western and the United Way had their most successful years ever! Because of our teams' hard work, the \$97,000 raised helped drive United Way and Western to a **record-breaking \$2.27 million for our community.***

Mike Chapnick
Director of Sales, Western Financial Group

Wawanesa is proud to sponsor the Western Financial Group Communities Foundation.



Wawanesa
Insurance

wawanesa.com



Learn more about the United Way Winnipeg.

WESTERN INSPIRATIONAL AWARD

Karl Ericksson **Selkirk Secondary School, Kimberley, BC**

The Foundation celebrates our Future Leaders through the Western Inspirational Award. Awarded annually, this bursary is given to high school students who have displayed outstanding community and school spirit or have overcome adversity and/or hardships. These students inspire us and their communities, and this award recognizes their efforts and determination to meet life's challenges.

The following is a story about one of our 2022 Western Inspirational Award Recipients, Karl Erickson.

In the Spring of 2021, Karl attended a ski training camp. With the sun shining bright, Karl burned the retina and macula in both of his eyes due to the sun reflecting off the snow. This accident took 87% of his vision leaving him with a condition called Solar Retinopathy.

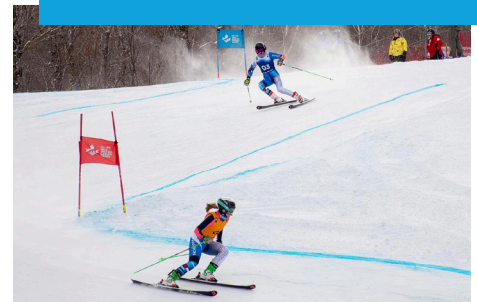
"Before the accident my dream and goal was to be a pilot. Being legally blind, I will never be able to get a driver's licence or become a pilot. When I graduated from High School this past June, I watched my friends and classmates go to college to start pursuing their dreams. I was feeling lost and not sure what I wanted to do or what my purpose would be. In November of 2022, I decided to join the Para Snow Sport program and immediately knew this is where I belong. I am around people who understand me and my disability and accept me as I am. Ski racing visually impaired is a major challenge but I love it. It gives me purpose and hope.

My goal is to make the Canadian Para-Alpine Ski Team and represent Canada at the 2026 Paralympics in Milano Cortina Italy. I am learning all that I can to adapt to my new disability and become a successful ski racer."

Karl Ericksson
2022 Western Inspirational Award Recipient



In early 2023, Karl won the gold medal in the Giant Slalom at the Canada Games and he continues to inspire with his accomplishments.



UKRAINE HUMANITARIAN APPEAL

Supporting New Arrivals with the Canadian Red Cross

The conflict in Ukraine continues to have widespread and devastating humanitarian impacts, and the Red Cross continues to work around the clock to respond to humanitarian needs in Ukraine and surrounding countries. In partnership with our Foundation, Western Financial Group was humbled to be in a position to provide much-needed support through a combined donation of \$100,000 to the Canadian Red Cross.

The Red Cross has collectively supported more than 5 million people impacted by the conflict in Ukraine and surrounding countries. The Red Cross has longstanding experience in welcoming new arrivals to Canada, having played an instrumental role in supporting Syrian refugees in 2016 and Haitian asylum seekers in 2017.



6,832

individuals in

3,170

households
registered by the CRC



9,084

welcome packages
distributed on site



1,082

beaver plush toys
distributed to children



1,064

sim cards distributed
on site

*I would like to share my heartfelt thanks on behalf of the Canadian Red Cross for the support provided by Western Financial Group to assist with the humanitarian needs of people in Canada displaced by the Ukraine conflict. Your assistance is really appreciated and **making a critical difference in people's lives.** Thank you!*

Jenn McManus

Vice President for Canadian Red Cross in Alberta and the Northwest Territories



*Many thanks to Western Financial Group for the **wonderful donation of \$100,000** in support of the Ukraine Humanitarian appeal in Canada– your gift and generosity goes a long way in helping people through a very difficult time.*

Amber Williams

Senior Manager, Corporate Partnerships, Alberta and Northwest Territories, Canadian Red Cross



*I was very impressed by the sensitivity and warmth with which the Red Cross treated me and my daughter, considering the circumstances in which we now find ourselves. Although emotionally it is really difficult for us, meeting such wonderful people, like you, is **like an ointment that helps heal wounds.***

Thank you for your patience and kindness.

Ivanna and Anichka

Support Recipients



COMMUNITY FEATURE

FORT ST. JOHN

Child Development Centre Society of Fort St. John & District

The Western Financial Group Communities Foundation supported the Child Development Centre by providing a \$5,000 Infrastructure Grant to their Raise the Roof Campaign for purchase of a replacement roof for the Centre.

There are **success stories everyday** at the **Child Development Centre.**

Children learning to communicate, gaining mobility, interacting with their peers, and forging friendships are a few examples. If I had to give one example, I would say seeing one of our clients getting their first custom wheelchair; by complete coincidence it was at the same time that athlete Rick Hansen was here touring our building. Mr. Hansen stopped the tour, joined the little boy in his session with the therapist and by the end of it, both the boy and the man were popping wheelies in their chairs and laughing like crazy. The confidence and sheer joy was pretty terrific. I am blessed to be a part of this organization; we share some really hard days with families sometimes.

Tana Millner

Executive Director, Child Development Centre Society of Fort St. John & District

Photos courtesy of the Child Development Centre Society of Fort John & District



MA MURRAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

The Western Financial Group Communities Foundation supported the Ma Murray School by providing a \$5,000 Infrastructure Grant to assist with the costs of a much-needed upgrade to their kindergarten playground.

The Ma Murray Community School aims to create a welcoming community where students get creative and hands-on learning experiences.

*Donations from organizations like Western **help us take care of our schools and the children that attend them.** Many projects and repairs/upgrades are not covered in the school budget and the parent council have to raise the funds to pay for them. We are very grateful for the donation.*

Loranne Shields

Parent Council, Ma Murray Community School



COMMUNITY FEATURE

DOIG RIVER FIRST NATION

CULTURAL SPACES PLAN

This year, the Western Financial Group Communities Foundation was proud to award \$5,000 Community Infrastructure Grants to 58 different projects, five of which were given to Indigenous and First Nations communities. One of these grants was given to Doig River First Nation, Tsáá? Ché Ne Dane, a proud Dane-zaa people indigenous to the upper Peace River region of British Columbia and Alberta.

Their traditional base extends in all directions from Gat Tah Kwâ, now called the city of Fort St. John. Today, their members participate in the modern economy while practising their unique language, culture and traditions.



We came to be known as the Fort St. John Beaver Band, acknowledging our place as first peoples of this region, after 1794, when colonizers arrived with the fur trade. In 1900, our headmen signed Treaty 8 to preserve our rights to hunt and trap and to work alongside newcomers in peace. It was only after the fur trade, and as recently as 1952, that we were forced to settle on reserves. In 1977, our ancestors (the Fort St. John Beaver Band) were divided and defined by the Department of Indian Affairs as two separate Nations, the Doig River First Nation and the Blueberry River First Nation.

Today, DRFN's population is 335 people and our members live on and off reserve.

Our community is engaged in a range of economic initiatives focused on strengthening our economic base, while improving the health and wellness of our people. In 2020, we developed a Cultural Spaces plan, which includes 20 different on- and off-reserve cultural spaces throughout our territory. Establishing quality cultural buildings and gathering spaces supports the vision for our community and is identified as a priority in our Community Plan.

The cultural spaces in our plan are vital, connected part of our larger infrastructure needs and come from a longstanding history of engagement with our members.

Improvements to existing infrastructure spaces including the ball diamonds, and new church property are also identified in the plan. We anticipate adding better lighting, washrooms and a playground area at our ball diamonds.

Mitul Ramani
Doig River First Nation



Please visit the Tsáá? Ché Ne Dane Culture website to learn more about their creation story, their long line of Dreamers, cultural practices and identity as hunters and gatherers.



Over the holiday season, our new Western Financial Group branches in Schomberg and King City celebrated their full integration into Western by supporting two vital local charities in Ontario. Through the Foundation, grants of \$5,000 were given to the Matthews House and Doane House Hospice. These are their stories.

MATTHEWS HOUSE HOSPICE

Alliston, ON | Investing in our Communities

The Matthews House Hospice provides hospice and community services in Alliston, Ontario. They believe everyone should have access to the right palliative and bereavement care and offer a full spectrum of wellness services and community support programs.



We chose to support the Matthews House Hospice as they provide many important services and programs for youth, grieving children, widowed partners, and the list goes on.

I love that this is just in our backyard, and even though I have never had to watch a loved one pass, I know others that have, and they speak very highly of this hospice. We also have a long-standing client of ours in this facility, which makes this donation so much more special.

Nicole Gray

Western Financial Group, Branch Manager



*This donation is much needed in order to upgrade our security system. Once this upgrade is complete, Matthews House can accept those living with dementia into our residence for caregiver relief. We will be able to implement a day program for people with dementia, which will allow **relief for their caregivers and opportunities for those with dementia** to socialize with others and participate in programs developed specifically for them.*

Margaret Bachle

CEO of Matthews House

DOANE HOUSE HOSPICE

Newmarket, ON | Investing in our Communities



Doane House Hospice is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to enhancing quality of life and supporting those undergoing treatment for a life-limiting illness and their loved ones. Doane House Hospice has offered free programs for bereavement, caregiver support, art therapy and more for the last 33 years in the York Region area. They are a volunteer-based organization, and rely on donations to continue their work.

*We are so pleased and honoured that Western Financial Group's King City branch chose us to donate to. We cannot tell you how much we appreciate the wonderful donation, which will go a **long way in helping us provide several kinds of support** for people in Newmarket and surrounding areas.*

Chrissie Flynn

Administrative Assistant for Doane House Hospice



Stephanie Li, Assistant Branch Manager, presented the \$5,000 donation to Doane House Hospice

From left to right: Chrissie Flynn, Doane House; Natasha Vanden-Bergh, Insurance Advisor; Camile Garzon, Doane House; Stephanie Li, Assistant Branch Manager

ESTEVAN PUBLIC YOUTH CENTRE

Estevan, South Saskatchewan

Through the Western Financial Group Communities Foundation, Western's local Estevan branch donated \$2,209 to the Estevan Public Youth Centre (EPYC) to help create safe spaces for youth in this small community.

"It started with many months of due diligence and a strong community partner in United Way Estevan. We began by pulling together a team that had a passion to serve our community's youth. From there, we used other youth organizations within our province as mentors. We worked together to formulate our own vision, mission, and values. From the outset, we were scanning our community for a potential brick and mortar location.

"With that in place, we've been able to provide drop-in programming every weekend for youth in grades 7-12, as well as provide after-school drop-in three days a week. EPYC is free for all the kids who want to go meet new people, play games, crafts, watch movies and more.. Estevan has not had a safe fun place for teenagers to hang out at for years. We feel this Centre is very important for our community to support so the kids have somewhere to go and have fun in our small town!"

Sherry Goudy

Insurance Advisor, Western Financial Group Estevan



Photos courtesy of the Estevan Public Youth Centre



We are committed to building a culture of wellness and wellbeing at Western. The Western Financial Group Communities Foundation was thrilled to offer an exciting opportunity for our employees to rally together for their health and the health of our communities!

In April 2022, the Foundation launched a Fitness Challenge open to employees from coast to coast as a chance to have fun, get active, and raise funds for charities in our communities. With many monthly team challenges to participate in, our employees tracked their active minutes, and the two winning teams donated their winnings to two charities of their choice.

With over 35 teams and 500+ employees participating, we logged over 350,000 active minutes, resulting in an \$8,143 donation, split between the Foundation’s Support the Cause initiative and two local charities of choice, the Okotoks Family Resource Centre and Jump Start.





Western
FINANCIAL GROUP
Communities Foundation

Thank you to all our people, our partners and our donors who commit to supporting the Western Financial Group Communities Foundation. We look forward to strengthening our relationships with you all, and building new relationships with the many deserving charitable causes operating in our local cities and towns for years to come.