



Linking Generations

2019-2020 Annual Report

Building Caring Communities Through Intergenerational Programs

Vision: Where seniors and youth build relationships that enrich lives and enhance communities

Mission: Linking Generations creates connections between seniors and youth by nurturing friendships built through volunteering and structured mentorship

Message from the Board Chair

This past year for Linking Generations has been one of ups and downs, of routine and a need to innovate. All of us on the board believe in the Society and the good it does for the wider community. The board, contractors, and volunteers have all worked hard over the past year, making sure that our programs can adapt to the rapid and significant changes in our operating environment. As with many organizations, we had to change significantly when COVID-19 meant we were no longer able to have seniors and their school aged partners in the same room.

We started the year with a new four-year strategic plan that reconfirmed our vision of success. We see COVID as a bump on that road, but not a reason to abandon the vision for Linking Generations. Our executive director, Debbie has been a pillar of strength and has been willing to try out new ways of connecting the people we work with. Our program coordinators have also had to change significantly this year, and I am really pleased that the board saw value in keeping the group together through the entire year. As for the board itself, we have seen some natural change as some people have left and others joined us. This is always a good idea for a board of directors as we continue to imagine and prepare for the future of Linking Generations.

Former boards made some prudent financial choices, and we are grateful for that. Our partners, funders and sponsors have largely stayed with us through this past year, though there are some who have had to step back for financial reasons. We have kept the programs running and the Society continues to be viable even with the restrictions we have faced.

We look ahead to this coming year knowing that the program is sound, but that we need to continue to adapt. What we saw as priorities at this time last year have had to change. We have proven our programs can switch to a largely virtual format, knowing that it is still second best to meeting face to face. We see ongoing growing demand for our programs locally and further afield. We have our eyes on what comes next for Linking and we are confident that we remain on the right track.

Thank you all,

Ian McCormack

Chair, Board of Directors



Board of Directors

The Board of Directors for The Linking Generations Society of Alberta is comprised of dedicated volunteers who are recruited from the County of Strathcona and the neighbouring communities. Our board is responsible for evaluating the Society's goals and objectives to ensure that all programs accomplish the tasks set out in the Board's strategic plan. We are thankful to our Board members for their vision and dedication to improving the lives of seniors and students within The County of Strathcona.

Chairperson: Ian McCormack

Treasurer: Tammy Start

Secretary: Barb Berndt

Director: Melanie Debnam

Director: Lauren Ong

Director: Bev Miskiw-Chetek

Director: Tracy Lockhart

Director: Teagan de Sequin

Executive Director: Debbie Sinclair

Executive Director Report

Linking Generations continues to address the need for Community Connectedness, Social Responsibility, and Inclusion. Our programs connect w/ individuals from all stages of life, all cultures & all religions to contribute to an overall "improved health" of the community.

This has been a challenging year for our seniors. As Linking Generations navigated a new world created by this challenging COVID global pandemic, the need for intergenerational connections between seniors and youth became more evident than ever before. COVID reinforced how critical it is that our community seniors be connected to family and to friends. With severe visiting restrictions placed at all senior facilities, many seniors had little or no contact with the outside world.

Beginning in March of 2020, Linking Generations created a letter writing program, where all program participating students wrote weekly letters to their "linked" seniors. Each week, these letters were forwarded to the senior facilities so that they could be delivered like regular mail. Seniors even undertook with writing back to the students! We are proud to share that over 250 letters/emails were shared between the linked students and seniors! Some of our participating seniors and students also connected virtually through Skype or Zoom. Linking Generations helped our seniors remain cared for, valued, and connected.

Linking Generations is continuing to make a difference in our community by providing Intergenerational Connections to our youth and seniors. Intergenerational connections are proven to enrich the lives of both youth and seniors in long-lasting and meaningful ways. When youth find ways to engage and develop relationships with the elderly, these experiences can build self-esteem, develop leadership skills, and encourage a lifelong commitment to volunteering. For seniors, intergenerational connections provide the opportunity to transfer knowledge and wisdom, acknowledge self-worth, and feel they are contributing members of society.

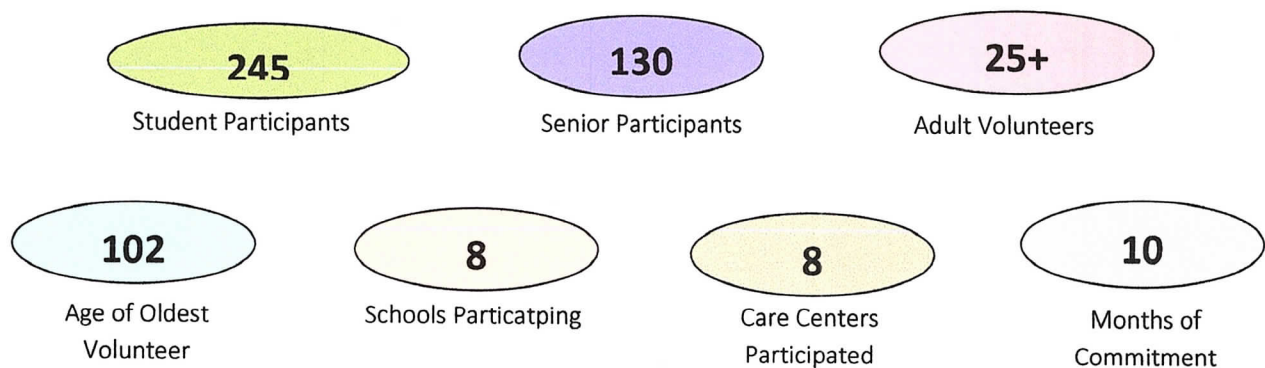
In the wake of COVID-19 and the start of moving towards a new normal, Linking Generations spent the summer months in preparation for our 2020-2021 Program re-start. It became even more evident that our seniors are isolated, lonely, and withdrawn. We are committed to providing programs to help seniors better cope through the pandemic and day to day life in general.

Debbie Sinclair
Executive Director June 2020



Supportive Intergenerational School Programs

The number of people over 65 continues to grow in Strathcona County. The County 'Senior' population has increased by 35% over the previous census of 2011 as compared to a 23% increase in Alberta. In our 2019-2020 programming year, our senior volunteer participation increased by 18% over last year and our student volunteer participation increased by 16% over last year, indicating an over-all program increase of 17% participation over prior year. Linking Generations Intergenerational School Programs impact more than 350 students and seniors each year. Our programs provide "mentored and structured visits" aimed at building relationships between seniors and youth in our community. The purpose of our programs is to bring the generations together so they can share their knowledge and life experiences and to encourage volunteering and social responsibility in youth.



Thank you to our partnership schools and lodges, who help facilitate the success of our programs, and to our students for your interest and dedication to come weekly and visit with seniors. Our seniors open their hearts and take the time to mentor these students - This becomes such a life learning/changing experience for everyone.



Volunteer Grandparent Program

Linking Generations is pleased to offer the **Volunteer Grandparent Program**, an initiative which offers seniors in Strathcona County further opportunities to help bridge the multi-generational gap. With funding provided by Strathcona County through its Social Services Grant Program the Volunteer Grandparent Program was created in response to a lack of opportunities for young and older generations to relate in an increasingly age-segregated society. Working in collaboration with Volunteer Strathcona, the Volunteer Grandparent Program placed 50+ seniors into elementary classrooms this year. Senior volunteers enjoyed the chance to share skills, knowledge & experience, while providing a valuable community service. The overall success of this program was amazing- teachers shared how our program allowed youth to see seniors in a different light and our seniors have shared how much they loved the experience of sharing their own stories with the younger generations.



Our Volunteer Grandparent "Gramma Dorothy"

Measurable Program Outcomes & Benefits

Our organization places emphasis on achieving our Long-term Goals, ultimately fulfilling our Vision and Mission Statements:

- ✓ To continue to build relationships with youth in the program and within our community.
- ✓ To continue to engage schools to build skills and citizenship in students.
- ✓ To enhance the quality of life of seniors through sharing their wisdom and life experience with young people.
- ✓ To respond to changing environments as we create and deliver innovative programs.
- ✓ To know that Linking Generations is well known for the excellent program it offers.
- ✓ To ensure that Linking Generations provides the best value possible to youth, seniors, Funders, and the community we serve.



4900 Total Volunteer Hours

Linking Generations is all about student and senior volunteers. We recorded 4900 volunteer hours donated from September 2019 to March 15th, 2020. Due to COVID-19, our programs were halted in March, however our students and seniors continued to connect through letter writing and virtually. Not only do our seniors and students volunteer their time, our Board of Directors also donate many hours as well.



Program Testimonials

Senior Participant

Linking Generations gives me a purpose for living and enjoying my days. The girls who visit with me each week are "my girls"- they share stories and insights to what life is like today as a teenager. I look forward to my visits each week with them.

School Principal- Volunteer Grandparent Program

"The Grandparent program has been a great addition to our school. It is wonderful to have community members come into the school and share their knowledge and past experiences with our students. Children begin to learn to respect seniors if they have the opportunity to build relationships, however many children are unable to connect with grandparents due to blended families or living distances. This program offers students a chance to strip away the stereotypes that youth form of seniors".

Grade 9 Student

I am so thankful that I was able to have this opportunity. This year has gone by super fast and we have learnt so much about each other and created bonds that will never be forgotten. Linking generations gave us a chance to do crafts, play games, and share stories with our seniors. Thank you for this opportunity and I shout out a huge thank you to the seniors who make the decision to sign up for this program. I know that teenagers can sometimes have a bad reputation, so thank you for opening your hearts and taking a chance on getting to know us. I think that we can all agree that while the generations can seem so far apart, we have all learned that we have so much more in common than we ever could have imagined. Thank you to our school for supporting this program and allowing us the opportunity to build relationships with, what we think are some pretty awesome people!

2019-2020 Program Year Funding Partners

Each year we benefit from the generosity of our funding partners with whom we work collaboratively to achieve lasting impact in the lives of youth, seniors, and society as a whole. Apart from the organizations listed below, we are also grateful to the individuals who continue to donate personally to the cause of connecting generations. *Linking Generations Society of Alberta is a registered charity. Our charitable number is 845667070 RR0001*

Thank you to our generous funding partners!

County of Strathcona County - Family
Community Services
United Way Regional Community
Investment
Suncor Energy Foundation
Imperial Oil
FortisAlberta
County Clothes-Line Foundation
Shell Scotford
Sherwood Park Rotary Club

Heartland Housing Foundation
North West Redwater Sturgeon Refinery
Sherwood Care
Chartwell Seniors Residence
Christensen Developments -Bedford
Residence
All Seniors Care-Summerwood Residence
Elk Island Catholic School Board
Elk Island Public-School Board
Individual and Personal Donations

Message from the Treasurer

Linking Generations goal is to ensure the public and donated funds we are entrusted with are used to provide the highest quality programming and supports possible. We thank you for continuing to support Linking Generations especially during these challenging times and look forward to continuing to make a difference in the lives of our community seniors, students, and families.

As we head into Fiscal 2021 and a new strategic plan, the Linking Generations Board of Directors will be assisting in the implementation of important strategic initiatives that will further strengthen the foundation of our programs.

Tammy Start,
Board Treasurer

June 30th, 2020 Financial Statements



Linking Generations Society of Alberta Statement of Financial Position As at June 30

	June 2020	June 2019
Assets		
Cash	\$ 168,391	163,834
Investments	\$ -	0
Total assets	\$ 168,391	\$ 163,834
Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 2,765	4,773
Deferred government grants	-	-
Total liabilities	\$ 2,765	4,773
Net assets		
Restricted net assets - current year	\$ 52,000	65,500
Unrestricted net assets - current year	\$ 113,626	93,561
Total net assets	\$ 168,391	\$ 163,834

Prepared on behalf of the Board of Directors:

Ian McCormick, Chair

Tammy Start, Treasurer



Linking Generations Society of Alberta Statement of Operations For the year ended June 30

	June 2020	June 2019
Revenues		
Government grant revenues	\$ 38,300	\$ 1,200
Community grant revenues	32,182	53,906
Donation revenues	315	808
Interest revenue	66	542
Total revenues	70,863	56,456
Expenses		
Program delivery - junior high	39,083	27,978
Program delivery - senior high	12,008	12,046
Program delivery - grandparent program	9,255	4,397
Public relations & fundraising	7,354	7,064
Total expenses	67,699	51,485
Excess of revenues over expenses	3,164	4,971