Linking Generations

2024-2025 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.

A Message from Our Board of Directors

The Board of Linking Generations has seen another successful year for Linking Generations. Linking Generations continues to provide opportunity for the youth and seniors of Sherwood Park and Fort Saskatchewan to meet and develop relationships that appreciates the uniqueness of each other.

The Board acknowledges the leadership of Debbie Sinclair; Executive Director and her team of Program Coordinators who are instrumental in the delivery of programs that make Linking Generations recognized in the communities of Sherwood Park and Fort Saskatchewan. This recognition includes the receipt of the Kings Coronation Medal to Debbie Sinclair and the award to Linking Generations of the Alberta School Boards Association Zone 2/3 Friends of Education Award.

Awards of the above nature are an acknowledgement of the excellence of the programs, the people and the services Linking Generations delivers. The greatest rewards are in the words of the students and seniors who have been involved in our programs. Consistent feedback is positive, and our programs are frequently over subscribed. Our grandparent program has seen more teachers in the Elk Island School Division request this program in their schools for the upcoming school year. Our elementary school student program has been a huge success in bringing the younger students into seniors residences. In one instance one resident requested their rehabilitation schedule be changed so they did not miss the students' visits.

Linking Generations is a not-for-profit organization. We are deeply appreciative our funding partners who continue to support Linking Generations. Our Executive Director works hard to search grant opportunities so Linking Generations can maintain its' excellent program delivery. The Board oversees the financial status of the organization to ensure a viable financial future of the organization.

Thank you, to the Board members who continue their volunteer commitment to Linking Generations.

Ms. Lynn Olenek
Linking Generations
Board Chair
September 2025



2023-2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairperson:
Lynn Olenek

Treasurer:
Shelly McNeill

Secretary:
Barb Berndt

Director:
Alyre Morin

Director:
Kevin Capowski

Director:
Wendy Thomas

Director:
Marilyn Spilchen

Director:
Keeley Roesler

Executive Director:
Debbie Sinclair

A Message from our Executive Director

It is difficult to capture on paper the heart and soul of a program like Linking Generations. We believe we are building citizenship in our youth, helping to instill the benefits of volunteering and the importance of understanding and respecting the past generation. We provide seniors an opportunity to share their wisdom and life experience with a younger generation, and to feel valued and connected to the wider community. For our student participants, our programs offer a chance to learn from and engage with seniors in a meaningful way, building empathy and understanding that will stay with them for a lifetime.

Our 2024-2025 program year brought many successes, seeing approx.286 visits held between our linked seniors and students. It is a fact that many times our visits may be cancelled due to outbreaks at our various senior facilities, however this program year we only faced 8 outbreak closures. Our programs were over-scribed by students and seniors alike, with our total participants being 1832 individuals. The relationships which develop over 10 months of visits create social and emotional development and leadership skills. Through these visits, there is a mutual transfer of knowledge as students and seniors connect, social isolation is reduced, and self-esteem increases as participants report a deeper sense of fulfillment in their lives.

Our Share and Care Programs are facilitated at four long term care facilities, where elementary students in grades 1-4 and visit once per week with our seniors who are residing in long term care and memory care. Students read to the seniors or simply sit and color with them while talking about anything the senior chooses. Our Share and Care programs are proving to not only be a benefit to our youth, but our Long term Care facilities share that the seniors are feeling more connected and are generally much happier on the students visit days.

Our Volunteer Grandparent Program continued to flourish with high awareness of our program in the community. We placed 70+ senior volunteers in elementary school classrooms this year, where each senior visited 1-3 times per month sharing life stories, or assisting struggling students with math, English or reading.

There are many individuals and organizations that support Linking Generations in a myriad of ways, from providing funding to keep our programs going or to innovate in times where face-to-face meetings are not possible, to the volunteer seniors and teens. It takes that proverbial village to raise a child, and Linking Generations is no different. We are focused on making our communities better and we are committed to the long-term benefit of those communities and the people who call them home.

Debbie Sinclair
Executive Director
June 2025

OUR INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS

Intergenerational programs are more important than they have ever been in our 21-year history. We know from experience that intergenerational programs build lasting friendships, keep youth and seniors connected, reduce isolation and depression, break down stereotypes, ageism, and racism. They help both youth and seniors to feel more optimistic about their futures.

Our programs can in some years involve more than 1000 students and 500 seniors connecting together weekly or biweekly for 90-minute visits. Through these visits, there is a mutual transfer of knowledge as students and seniors connect, social isolation is reduced, and self-esteem increases as participants report a deeper sense of fulfillment in their lives.

Junior High/High School and Senior Facility Partnership Programs

When we think about what our junior high and high school students gain from having an intergenerational relationship with a senior in their lives the list is long, but at the heart of it, it's about connection.

Both students and seniors offer each other something that is so rare in a world that often feels rushed: their full attention. They listen to each other without checking the clock. They sit together and truly see each other. Students make time for the seniors' stories – even if it's the ones that trail off, and circle back. That kind of presence speaks volumes.

We've seen students grow in confidence simply because they had an opportunity to become friends with a senior. Someone who may be anywhere from 60 to 80 years older than themselves. We have seen a shy teenage begin to emerge. We have seen students who are struggling begin to look forward to visiting with their linked senior. Students begin to see themselves as capable because they're actually learning from another person. And then there's the joy. So much joy. The giggles during a simple board game, and the hugs when they arrive to the senior's facility. These are the little things that we witness when our seniors and students connect.

Seniors build new friendships with a young person, who is not a relative and who loves to hear their stories. Have you ever asked yourself, "I wish I would have asked my mom/dad that question?" Well, our students do ask those hard questions. And seniors are more than willing to tell their stories.

Our seniors may not understand how much they're impacting the lives of our students. They may think that they're just helping out for an hour or two a month but what they're really doing is helping to shape the community of tomorrow.





Share and Care Programs

Two years ago, we had to once again pivot and think out of the box regarding our program offerings. We began to see older seniors aging out of our school and senior facility programs. Seniors were becoming isolated once again as their health declined, and many being were moved to long term care facilities. After many conversations with health providers and our senior facilities, we implemented a pilot program whereas we would bring elementary students in grade 1-4 to the facilities so that seniors could visit with the very young generation. Students read books, color or simply play a game of snakes and ladders with our seniors.

Volunteer Grandparent Programs

The Volunteer Grandparent program was created in response to a lack of opportunities for young & old to relate in an increasingly age-segregated society. Our senior volunteer grandparents volunteer in elementary school classrooms for approx. 1.5 hours per month, or more if the volunteer chooses to do so.

K-6 is such a special and important time in a child's life. These are the years when children are not just learning the basics of reading, writing, and math, they're learning how to be in a relationship with others. How to share, how to listen, how to take turns, and how to be part of a community. They're discovering who they are and how they belong. That's what makes our Linking Generations Volunteer Grandparent program so meaningful in the elementary classrooms.

Our “senior” volunteer grandparents bring something special to the classroom that no one else can. They offer calm in the middle of a busy day. They have a quiet wisdom and a steady presence that children naturally gravitate toward. Our senior volunteers are not in a hurry. They have time to sit beside a child, to ask how their day is going, to listen closely when they share something that might seem very small, but it’s very big for them.

This kind of attention is so powerful. Not every child has a grandparent in their life. The presence of our senior volunteer grandparents fills a gap in the most beautiful way. They bring their own stories, encouragement, and patience.

In today’s classrooms things move very quickly. Teachers are balancing large class sizes, managing diverse learning needs and doing their very best to reach every child, every day it’s joyful and it’s rewarding work but it’s also challenging -- that’s where our volunteer grandparents come in. Our senior volunteers don’t just show up. They lift our students one small act of love at a time. Whether it’s helping a child with tricky words, playing a quiet game, tying a shoelace or simply offering a smile to someone in the hallway who’s had a really rough morning. They do make a difference and for our teachers their presence is a breath of fresh air.

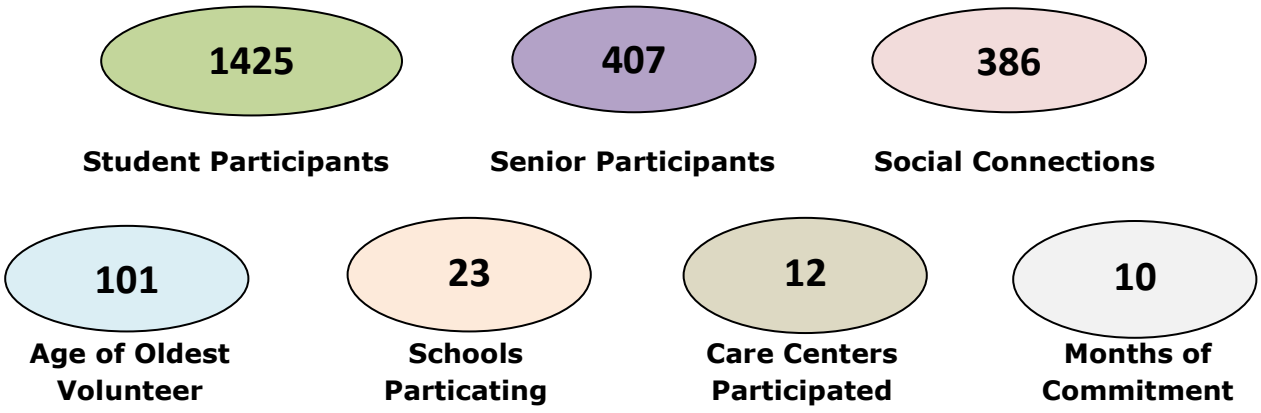




OUR VOLUNTEER PARTICPANTS

Linking Generations success and sustainability comes largely from volunteers who enable us to deliver leading edge programs. Students and seniors volunteer their lunch hours to be part of our program. They also volunteer their time for training sessions, program visits, our annual Family Meet and Greet event and program evaluation sessions. In addition, the Linking Generations Board of Directors and our team donate at least one hundred volunteer hours. As of June 30, 2025, we had contributed over 10K total volunteer hours.

Thank you to our partnership schools and lodges, who help to facilitate the success of our programs, and to our students for your interest and dedication to come 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.



PROGRAM TESTIMONIALS

As CEO of Sherwood Care, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the transformative power of this intergenerational program. The presence of early elementary students brings joy, energy, and curiosity into our home—qualities our residents deeply appreciate and respond to. The relationships formed through Linking Generations foster a sense of connection and purpose for our seniors, allowing them to share their stories, wisdom, and experiences with younger generations. For the students, this program offers a meaningful introduction to elder engagement. It helps build empathy, respect, and confidence in interacting with older adults—skills that will serve them for life. These are invaluable, character-building lessons that extend far beyond the classroom.

Elk Island Catholic School Superintendent:

For the past 21 years, Elk Island Catholic Schools (EICS) has been a participant of the Supportive School program, and this endeavor has been and continues to be a great asset to our schools.

Elk Island Catholic Schools (EICS) works with Linking Generations to engage students with seniors in our communities which foster connections between students and seniors in Sherwood Park and Fort Saskatchewan. This enriching program positively impacts the lives of both youth and seniors in long-lasting and meaningful ways. The relationship that is developed over time between seniors and youth through this mentorship program is vital to our community. The program encourages students to volunteer and promotes social responsibility.

Linking Generations was honored to accept this year's 2025 Alberta School Board Association Friends of Community Award for the benefit we offer to educators.



2024-2025 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
New Horizons for Seniors Program
Suncor
Imperial Oil
TC Energy
Enbridge
Edmonton Community Foundation
County Clothes-Line Foundation
Fortis Alberta
Heartland Housing Foundation
Northwest Redwater Refinery Partnership
Inter Pipeline
Wolf Midstream
City of Fort Saskatchewan
EIPS and EICS School Board
Twice But Nice
Sherwood Rotary Club
Fort Saskatchewan Rotary Club
Field Law, Edmonton, Alberta
Flaman Group of Companies
100 Women Who Care- Sherwood Park, Alberta
Individual Donations



Message from the Treasurer

Linking Generations programs are totally supported by donations from corporations, businesses, foundations, and individuals. Our programs are offered at no cost to the individual teens or seniors to enable all to participate regardless of economic circumstances.

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.

Our June 30th, 2025, statement of operations shows 'RESTRICTED NET ASSETS" of $177,223. This revenue amount reflects the grant funds/community donations which were awarded from Jan.2025 to June 2025 and MUST be reserved for operations commencing July 1,2025 to June 30, 2026.

Our current Linking Generations Society of Alberta Bylaws states we must have a secured reserve fund set aside for sustainability and to ensure we have a one-year of funds on hand to offer continuous programming. We currently have a restricted sustainability GIC reserve of $123,725.

As we head into Fiscal 2025-2026, our Linking Generations Board of Directors will be continuing to assist in the implementation of important strategic initiatives that will further strengthen the foundation of our programs.

Shelly McNiell
Board Treasurer
June 30, 2025

June 30th, 2025

Financial Statements

Linking Generations

Linking Generations

Statement of Financial Position As of June 30, 2025

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
ATB Cash	44,771.50
ATB Savings	247,162.97
Prepaid Expenses	1,843.00
Total Current Assets	293,777.47
Fixed Assets	
Computers	1575.99
Accum. Amortization	-721.03
Total Fixed Assets	854.96
Other Assets	
Other Investments	123,275.00
TOTAL ASSETS	$417,907.43
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	66.11
Total Current Liabilities	66.11
Equity	
Restricted Net Assets	177,223.38
Unrestricted Net Assets	240,617.94
Net Income	0.00
Total Equity	417,841.32
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	$417,907.43

Name:
Board Director
Audited Signature : Name: Wendy Thomas

Name: Kevin Capowski
Board Director
Audited Signature : Name:

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Statement of Operations July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

Income	
Business and Individual Donations	359.71
Foundation and Trust Grants	13,232.05
Federal Government Grants	25,675.00
Municipal Government Grants	105,950.00
Interest Income	8,557.95
Total Income	$153,774.71
Program Expenses	
Program ED Fees	48,667.50
Program Delivery Fees	52,050.00
Program Materials	5,108.93
Program Transportation	15,138.40
Program Ins - Student Liabilty	1,140.00
Total Program Expenses	$122,104.83
Grandparent Program	
Grandparent ED Fees	13,350.00
Grandparent Deilvery Fees	12,810.00
Grandparent Materials	339.02
Total Grandparent Program	26,499.02
General & Admin Expenses	
Advertising Expenses	654.63
Amortization Expense	366.41
Bank Fees	15.25
Dues and Membership	162.75
IT Services	426.60
Insurance - D and O	688.00
Meals & Entertainment	699.16
Office Supplies	1,307.25
Postage, Mailing Service	260.31
Printing and Copying	0.00
Program Development	527.50
Telephone	63.00
Unrealized Gain and Losses	0.00
Total General & Admin Expenses	$5,170.86
Total Expenses	$153,774.71
Net Income	**$0.00**