

# 2021 Annual Report



**In**clusion Alberta  
Supporting children and adults with developmental disabilities for 60+ years

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## PRESIDENT & CEO REPORT

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2021 has been a challenging year, with the pandemic continuing to test our resiliency and hope. Families continued to navigate the uncertainties of trying to keep their loved ones safe and well, while seeking windows of opportunity to move forward with their vision for an inclusive life. At Inclusion Alberta, we've sought to strike the balance between advocacy efforts such as ensuring pandemic safeguards through timely access to vaccines, to navigating the shifting landscape of government funding and policies, while sustaining hope through expanding access to the natural pathways to a good, inclusive life. In the pages that follow, the breadth of the efforts of Inclusion Alberta to support individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to thrive are detailed.

The year saw some significant achievements, despite the challenging climate. With public health restrictions remaining in place from 2020, we held our first ever virtual Family Conference which was very well received, with families embracing the opportunity to connect with other families and gain new insights and information to fuel their vision. Once again, our annual Changing Lives, Changing Communities fundraising event was held virtually, and the support we received from community was overwhelming. This combined with strong performance from the Foundation allowed us to move forward secure in the knowledge of sustained funding. Special thanks go to both Shawn Ergang and Wendy McDonald for their important contributions to the financial stability of Inclusion Alberta. We continued to offer virtual workshops and events and to enhance our ability to support families to vision and plan for a life of inclusion and meaning. With the pandemic continuing to limit our ability to safely gather, we completed our first, and hopefully last, virtual Family Leadership Series, with families courageously joining us for 13 Saturday mornings on Zoom across 2020-2021. We added to our staffing resources to assist families with planning and advocacy in Edmonton and received funding to develop a Family Resource Centre in Grande Prairie. Securing additional funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services also allowed for a major expansion of inclusive post-secondary opportunities which will continue into 2022. When complete, 18 new student positions will have been made available and partnerships with 2 to 3 new post-secondary institutions created. Additional funding also allowed us to expand our Rotary Employment Partnership to Vermillion and the Foothills Region. Combined, this has resulted in increased opportunities to support individuals and families to pursue their dreams of a life of contribution and meaning.

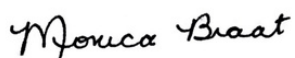
Inclusion Alberta's executive leadership and CEO have continued to engage our political leaders and senior bureaucrats throughout 2021 to communicate the message of thousands of families who seek better, more inclusive lives. We've produced resources and information and supported families and allies to engage in civic opportunities to relay their vision and expectation to be fully included in the plans of our province and country moving forward. As well, our advocates across the province continue to work daily to assist individuals and families to hold fast to their desire for an inclusive life, with the supports, resources, and opportunities necessary to achieve their dreams.

However, despite these achievements, many of the challenges faced by families in pursuing that life, challenges which pre-date the pandemic, are growing. Government support through the FSCD and PDD programs is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain, with many families exhausted by the continual need to fight for even the most basic of supports. This quiet constriction has placed many families already struggling with managing the public health crisis in harm's way. Pressures for increased congregation and segregation as the only offered support, chip away at hard fought advances in inclusion. Inclusive education remains elusive, with districts continuing to use resources as an excuse to deny inclusion. The passage of Bill C-7 expanding access to Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) is a further chilling indicator of the unconscious bias and systemic discrimination embedded in our society. The need for collective advocacy and a resulting societal and cultural shift recognizing the inherent value and worth of children and adults with developmental disabilities and the contributions inclusion makes to all our lives has seldom seemed so strong.

The heart of our movement is and has always been families. Their unwavering refusal to give up hope, to persevere through times of darkness and struggle, is what drives the work of Inclusion Alberta. In the pages ahead, you will read all the ways that Inclusion Alberta is working to enable and advance the opportunities and support for children and adults with developmental disabilities, and their families, to pursue lives of meaning, possibility, and hope.

The strength of any organization is its people, and in this way Inclusion Alberta is no different. With a dedicated team of staff, we work to advance opportunities for children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families to experience lives of opportunity and belonging. None of this is possible without the commitment of the senior leadership team, Wendy McDonald, Billie Jack, Trina Steed, Charmaine McIntyre, and Catherine Oakleaf. Our Executive Assistant, Tara-Lee LaRose's uncanny ability to keep both the Executive and Leadership Team on track while providing important insight cannot be overstated. The mentorship and counsel provided by CEO Emeritus Bruce Uditsky is invaluable. We want to extend our deep appreciation to the Executive Committee of Barb MacIntyre, Keith Moore, Tina Trigg, Donna Desjardins, Trudy Hames, Sarah Pereira, and Cathy Laycock. Their oversight, mentorship, vision, and commitment to ensuring Inclusion Alberta remains steadfast in its efforts, so ever more children

and adults with developmental disabilities and their families have fully inclusive lives as valued and contributing members of our communities. A special thank-you to Donna Desjardins as she steps down from her role as Treasurer, for her unwavering commitment and contribution to Inclusion Alberta and the families we support. Your wisdom and passion for the cause will continue to be relied upon for years to come.



**Monica Braat**  
**President**



**Trish Bowman**  
**CEO**

## TREASURER'S REPORT

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### **Basis of Presentation**

Inclusion Alberta's Audited Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2021, have been prepared on the basis of a not-for-profit organization, which includes a note to the financial statements indicating Inclusion Alberta Society controls the Inclusion Alberta Foundation and its activities. The form of reporting is currently required by not-for-profit organizations that control another not-for-profit organization through its management and operations. The inclusion of the note to the Audited Financial Statements provides an understanding of the financial position and operation of the Foundation.

### **Results of Operations**

During the year ended December 31, 2021, Inclusion Alberta reported a surplus of \$1,399,769 as compared to \$679,981 in 2020.

The total revenues for the year were \$7,233,537 compared to \$5,710,839 in 2020. This is a result of an increase in contracts and grants of \$1,061,693, and included an increase in donations from the Foundation due to the Foundation resuming more normal operations in 2021.

The total expenditures for the year were \$5,940,922 compared to \$5,092,188 in 2020, resulting in an increase of \$848,734. This is mainly because of increased staffing due to the expansion of contracts and grants. General expenditures remained lower than expected due to continued pandemic restrictions throughout 2021.

**Submitted by**  
**Donna Dejardins**  
**Treasurer**

# INCLUSION ALBERTA FOUNDATION

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As the pandemic continued through 2021 the Inclusion Alberta Foundation (IAF) was buoyed by large inventories collected and stored through 2020. Basic collection, primarily from our donation bins, continued throughout the year and while adding to the immediate inventory all stored product was ultimately delivered by the beginning of the 4th Quarter.

Inventory from 2020 allowed IAF to have a successful year while maintaining a presence in the donation marketplace. As 2021 grew to a close the product needs from Value Village began to increase and expectations are they will continue to increase into 2022. The vast majority of 2021 was much like the restart of Value Village operations in 2020 wherein our deliveries were in the range of 50-60% of quota for the majority of the year.

With the timing of a potential return to full quotas in 2022 remaining uncertain, planning work started at the end of 2021 as to how we would meet those requirements if and when the time came. This was done while at the same time budgeting at a conservative level. A bin order was made for delivery in 2022 in addition to plans to reengage past partnerships followed by a restart of home pick-ups should the quota needs increase. This would also need to include increased staffing and the possibility of adding trucks, increasing our expenses.

Regardless of quota requirements IAF will work to ensure expected contributions to Inclusion Alberta will be met.

I would like to extend a thank you to the Foundation board members for their contributions, time, and efforts throughout this past year. As well, I'd like to acknowledge and thank Shawn and Trish for their continued extraordinary efforts in shifting and sustaining operations through the challenges of these pandemic times.

Submitted by  
**Monica Braat**  
President

## INCLUSION CANADA

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The work that Inclusion Canada does nationally often directly impacts or calls on the involvement of Alberta families and/or our provincial association. As Alberta's representative to the board, I'd like to take this opportunity to share a few highlights of the work of Inclusion Canada over the past year. Find a more detailed outline of Inclusion Canada's work in their [2020-21 Annual Report](#).

Leading up to the federal election in September 2021, Inclusion Canada focused on reaching out to and educating candidates from all parties on the issues and priorities of people with an intellectual or developmental disability and their families. As well they produced and disseminated information sheets outlining party disability platforms to assist Canadians in making voting decisions.

In September 2020, the Federal government announced its plan to introduce a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). One of the components of this plan was to develop and implement a new Canada Disability Benefit. In response, Inclusion Canada updated their position statement on income security, designed an outline of recommendations for what the benefit should look like and since shared these recommendations with the federal government. In the spring of 2021, the government issued a Call for Proposals for cross country consultations on four pillars of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). Inclusion Canada was asked to lead consultations on the financial security pillar and will be a supporting partner on the other three pillars (lead by other disability-related organizations). These other pillars are disability-inclusive spaces, national employment strategy, and modernizing the federal government programs and services.

Federally, RWA (Ready, Willing and Able) is currently funded until September 2022. Inclusion Alberta accesses some of this grant money to support its employment initiatives. Late in 2021, Inclusion Canada, along with provincial associations, submitted a request for increased funding within the 2022-23 Budget to enable a continued and expanded RWA for a further three years. Additionally, Inclusion Canada board members and provincial association staff across the country have met with Members of Parliament to request they write to the Minister of Finance and copy the Prime Minister and Minister Qualtrough signalling their support for this budget ask. The Alberta Members of Parliament that we meet with in December were all supportive of this request.

Inclusion Canada continues to take a strong stance that Bill C7 (Medical Assistance in Dying legislation) is unacceptable and discriminatory and should be repealed. To this end, and working with other disability organizations, they are investigating a charter challenge. Lawyers and a case committee are currently in place, and they are in the process of considering plaintiffs.

In closing, I would like to extend a congratulations to Krista Carr, the Executive VP of Inclusion Canada, for being named as chairperson of the permanently reconstituted Ministerial Disability Advisory Group (MDAG) advising federal Minister Qualtrough, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion.

**Submitted by**

**Monica Braat**

**President, Inclusion Alberta  
Designate to the Inclusion  
Canada Board of Directors**



## LOCAL FAMILY ADVOCACY ASSOCIATIONS

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Communities across Alberta continue to manage the disruption associated with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, the volunteer board members continued to meet to plan and deliver workshops and other events to address the concerns of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families seeking an inclusive life. The local associations continued to meet virtually and deliver virtual events to maximize accessibility for families. When appropriate, local association board members have reached out individually to families seeking connection with other families to share resources and strategize. Local association volunteers also met with smaller groups of families to connect, build capacity, and clarify the needs and goals of the families in their respective communities.

### **Webinars and Events:**

In recognition of the continued importance of connecting and supporting their membership, the local associations offered virtual events and workshops. In addition to addressing specific topics that have been identified or requested by individual families and communities, the local associations also shared other community events that were offered virtually. Many new families were able to connect with their local association through an event hosted by the Darrell Cook Family Managed Supports Resource Centre or events from other local associations. Families, especially families with young children who may not have access to childcare or those living in rural areas, continue to express gratitude for the virtual options as they were able to attend more events. The virtual events were often shorter than in person events have been in years past and required reframing topics to suit online delivery and combat videoconference fatigue. In addition, the local associations provided more opportunities for families to meet in small groups using online breakout sessions in the hopes of fostering meaningful family-to-family connection. Attendance at virtual events was varied. Virtual events were more sparsely attended in the late spring and summer months. This could be attributed to the limitations of online workshops and an increasing desire to return to in person events as COVID-19 infection rates fell following the third wave. Inclusion St. Paul and Inclusion Wetaskiwin were able to meet in person several times over the summer but the Delta-driven fourth wave of the pandemic saw the local associations returning to postponing events or only meeting virtually.

Despite the ongoing challenges related to the pandemic, below is a list of some of events the local associations hosted this year:

- Living an Inclusive Life into the New Year
- Developing and Supporting Meaningful Employment
- Family Conversations
- Family Barbeque
- Visioning: Part One: Planning and Part Two: Advocacy
- Explaining the Disability Tax Credit
- Supporting Sexuality in People with Developmental Disabilities

Families shared their feedback from these events, workshops, and small group meetings. Families found these events valuable because “inclusion becomes more difficult as [their] child gets older,” or that the event meant that “you didn’t feel so alone.” One family shared that “great resources were mentioned, very interesting breakout sessions that helped with understanding, great tools to use.”

Inclusion Calgary and Inclusion Grande Prairie also started supporting small grassroots groups of families with a particular focus on inclusive education. In conversation, the families have started to see the similarities in their experiences and challenges. The Inclusion Calgary Collaboration Action Group has developed a series of events that they are offering from “parent to parent” for families interested in advocating for children seeking inclusion in Calgary schools. The small group in Grande Prairie has reached out to the school trustees in the area and has planned a workshop about inclusive education during this uncertain time for families in the area who are interested in learning more or joining with Inclusion Grande Prairie to effect change.

### Political/Civic Engagement

In the early months of 2021, the local associations reached out to their Members of Parliament to address proposed amendments to MAiD (Medical Assistance in Dying) legislation. A representative of the Inclusion Edmonton Region board wrote an open letter to the Government of Canada. Many board members from all local associations reached out to the Members of Parliament to meet virtually or in person to share their serious concerns about the discriminatory nature of Bill C-7 and the risk it poses to people with developmental disabilities.

Board members from Inclusion Wetaskiwin and Inclusion Grande Prairie met with the Minister of Community and Social Services in Alberta, Jason Luan as well as the Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) in their area to share the family voice for why Family Managed Supports (FMS) are so important for families seeking a good life for their family members. The families shared stories of the ways in which they were able to use this funding to build an inclusive life for their children or loved ones, including securing a home of their own, finding meaningful employment and registering a business. Families also shared the challenges of hiring and retaining staff in rural or isolated areas, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The local associations also shared information about the municipal elections that took place across Alberta in the fall. Inclusion Edmonton Region shared information in a newsletter to members about topics to discuss with candidates who may come knocking on the door or at candidate forums. A small group of families with support from Inclusion Grande Prairie engaged with their local trustees around inclusive education.

### **Highlights and Future Directions**

Local associations are made up of voluntary board members who work tirelessly to support the movement for inclusion at the community level. Across the province the associations are made up of families of individuals with developmental disabilities who understand the experience of seeking out adequate supports for a life of possibility for their family members with developmental disabilities. The boards have adjusted what they offer and how they offer this support to community as needed. Moving from in-person to virtual and then adjusting virtual events and meetings, the boards have worked to stay engaged and pay attention to what people need. The building of grassroots groups in Calgary and Grande Prairie to address inclusive education is a positive step to advance inclusion in Alberta. Inclusion Grande Prairie is starting to see the benefits of their efforts in the past two years to develop relationships with the school districts in the area and Inclusion Calgary is also planning to start to build a relationship with their public district. Though these efforts will require more time and effort to become sustainable, the commitment towards action for change is inspiring. This year has highlighted the commitment of the families and board members who are continuing to work with passion and focus despite challenging times to advocate for change towards more inclusive communities for all.

**Submitted by**

**Aqeela Khalid**

**Community Engagement  
Provincial Coordinator**

# ROTARY DISTRICT 5360 & 5370 EMPLOYMENT PARTNERSHIPS

With the help of committed allies, what started as an idea by a parent and Rotarian nearly 21 years ago is now an initiative that has created 671 quality jobs for individuals with developmental disabilities across the province. Beginning in Edmonton the partnership later expanded to the communities of Lloydminster, Red Deer, Grande Prairie, and Calgary. Earlier this year the partnership expanded to Vermilion and most recently to the Rotary Clubs of High River and Okotoks.

## Provincial Outcomes (January to December 2021)

|                                                                                                               |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Total jobs created to date starting in 2001                                                                   | 671     |
| New jobs created this year                                                                                    | 64      |
| Average wage (\$/hour)*                                                                                       | \$16.80 |
| Average hours per week                                                                                        | 16      |
| Number of individuals receiving external one-on-one on-the-job support after coordinator's onboarding support | 5       |
| Number of jobs currently in development                                                                       | 50      |
| Number of jobseekers being supported to find work                                                             | 140     |
| Number of Rotary Clubs involved                                                                               | 37      |

## Regional Results

|                | New Jobs  | Total Created | Active Jobs | Jos in Development | Job Seekers |
|----------------|-----------|---------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Edmonton       | 29        | 332           | 61          | 20                 | 65          |
| Lloydminster   | 2         | 88            | 18          | 4                  | 12          |
| Vermilion      | 0         | 0             | 0           | 2                  | 3           |
| Grande Prairie | 5         | 63            | 9           | 3                  | 11          |
| Red Deer       | 5         | 72            | 10          | 4                  | 10          |
| Foothills      | 0         | 0             | 0           | 0                  | 0           |
| Calgary        | 23        | 116           | 44          | 19                 | 55          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>64</b> | <b>671</b>    | <b>142</b>  | <b>52</b>          | <b>156</b>  |

\*Averages based upon aggregate data collected from the currently funded partnerships across the province but does not include long term employees who are no longer being followed-up and for which current data is not available.

## **COVID-19 Summary**

As the pandemic continues, 18 employees across the province are on leave or temporarily laid off. The total number of jobs lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic is 27.

## **Rotary Partners Highlights**

**A Celebration of 20 Years:** This incredible partnership was made possible 20 years ago by the Rotary Club of Edmonton Mayfield. This year the first employee hired through the Rotary Employment Partnership celebrated 20 years working with the Government of Alberta. The employee has had a typical experience of moving between various departments during her career and remains a valued employee 20 years later. She has been with Alberta Services for the past three years, and says she still learns something new every day.

As a result of expansion funding, and goals set for Rotary engagement, 18 presentations to Rotary Clubs and potential employers occurred across the province. Collectively Coordinators attended 156 Rotary meetings.

## **Steering Committee Highlights**

**Lloydminster Steering Committee members, sharing their network:** The Lloydminster Steering Committee tapped their business connections to help create an employment opportunity. Lloydminster Co-op became an inclusive employer when they hired a Grocery and Customer Service Clerk. The Co-op grocery team is excited to have the employee on their team and appreciates her work ethic.

Currently there are two new steering committees in development in Vermilion and Foothills (Rotary clubs of High River and Okotoks). With the addition of the new steering committees there will be seven Rotary Employment Partnership Steering Committees across Alberta with 37 clubs actively engaged in the partnership. Key elements of each meeting include updates from each Rotary Club, partnership promotion, job development, new jobs, and a review of job seekers. A portion of the meeting is dedicated to reviewing how to continue to engage Rotarians and the business community in securing meetings with potential employers.

As a result of increased Rotary engagement and goals to increase Steering Committee membership, two members joined the Edmonton Steering Committee, three new members in Red Deer joined, and three new members were welcomed in Calgary.

## Employers



### New Employers: VDG Salumi

VDG Salumi in Calgary recently hired an employee through the partnership as a product packer. In the future, the employee will also be responsible for cutting and pre-packaging charcuterie boards and attending markets with colleagues to sell products. The employer was an instructor for a culinary class this employee took at SAIT where he was impressed with her knife skills, liked her personality, and felt she would be a good fit at VDG Salumi. He believed she would be integral to the culture and work ethic he tries to instill in his business, and he was right.

- Overall, the Rotary Employment Partnership created 64 jobs throughout 2021.
- Current partnership employers such as Shoppers Drug Mart, City of Grande Prairie, Canadian Western Bank, Clark Builders, Government of Alberta, Pro Hockey Life, DHL Transportation, and Calgary Public Library all committed to hire again.

## Job Seekers

- There were 153 adults with developmental disabilities on job seeker lists across all seven partnerships in 2021. Coordinators continue to work with job seekers on using families' personal networks to reach out to the business community to find employment opportunities.
- As a result of families of job seekers using their networks to connect employers to the Rotary Employment Partnership coordinators, eight jobs were created this year.

## Partnership Promotion and Recognition



**Nicole Chu**  
Shoppers Drug Mart  
Community Inclusion Award  
Inclusion Alberta



**Ryan Gordon**  
Pro Hockey Life  
Community Inclusion Award  
Inclusion Alberta

Shoppers Drug Mart is a company that exemplifies diversity and inclusion. There are now four Shoppers Drug Mart locations in Edmonton which have hired through the Rotary Employment Partnership, and five individuals employed. Thank you to all the Shoppers Drug Mart hiring managers for promoting and enhancing the Rotary Employment Partnership.

Inclusion Alberta presented an award to Shoppers Drug Mart and Pro Hockey Life at the Inclusion Alberta President's reception in April 2021, acknowledging the wonderful example these businesses set in inclusive employment.

Submitted by  
**Trina Steed**  
Provincial Director,  
Employment Partnerships

**Wendy McDonald**  
Chief Operating Officer

## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PARTNERSHIP & COMMUNITY INCLUSION FACILITATOR

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### Youth Employment Partnership: Calgary & Edmonton

After securing additional resources from Community and Social Services, Inclusion Alberta was excited to relaunch the Calgary Youth Employment Partnership (YEP) in 2021. With youth employment being such an important contributor to and indicator for successful employment as an adult, the opportunities generated by the Partnerships are an important part of ensuring presence and participation on the normative inclusive pathway. Both youth employment initiatives had a development phase for the first few months of the year, promoting the partnerships at information sessions and on social media to find job seekers and peer mentors, as well as spread awareness about the benefits of employment in high school. As a result, once the provincial restrictions lessened from the pandemic and businesses began to open in May, both initiatives were in full swing, and Coordinators were busy supporting families on their journey of securing meaningful employment.

### Youth Employment Partnership 2021

|                     | Edmonton        | Calgary        | Total |
|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------|
| Total Jobs Created  | 57 (since 2014) | 7 (since 2021) | 64    |
| New Jobs in 2021    | 8               | 7              | 15    |
| Active Jobs         | 11              | 7              | 17    |
| Jobs in Development | 10              | 7              | 17    |
| Peer Mentors        | 8               | 5              | 13    |

### Community Inclusion Facilitator

| Youth Supported in 2021 | Youth Referred to Youth Employment | Youth Planning for Employment |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 11                      | 5                                  | 8                             |

The year 2021 was filled with uncertainty due to the pandemic. Continued restrictions and difficulty navigating opportunities in community caused some challenges for families with existing relationships and limited options to explore new ones. While at times in the past year many activities and clubs were opening up, there was continued uncertainty on the effects the new strains of COVID-19 would have when they did open which often resulted in re-opening for short periods of time or in unpredictable patterns. This made sustaining connections extremely challenging. However, families continued to be supported to think creatively about how to maintain existing and build new relationships during the extraordinary challenges and restrictions of COVID-19.



The Community Inclusion Facilitator and the Edmonton Youth Employment Partnership Coordinator continued to work together to support youth in planning and achieving their employment goals. One youth who had lost his job at a community recreation centre due to the pandemic, found a new opportunity through conversations with the Facilitator and the Youth Employment Coordinator. The young man and his family were encouraged to explore their own network and discovered they knew a manager at GoodLife fitness. Using this connection, the family was able to bridge communication to our inclusive employment supports and was consequently hired by GoodLife Fitness. These examples of collaboration not only strengthen the employment initiatives but build capacity during the isolating pandemic.

Submitted by  
**Trina Steed**  
Provincial Director, Employment  
Partnerships

**Caitlin Wray**  
Community Inclusion Facilitator

**Kevin Veenstra**  
Community Inclusion Facilitator

# INCLUSIVE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

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## Introduction and Overview

The work of inclusive post-secondary education in 2021 was dynamic and ever-changing in the continued response of the COVID-19 global pandemic. As the world began to grasp the longevity of the pandemic, the effects of navigating the difficulties brought by the first year of the virus became evident. Social isolation, halting of the typical rhythms of work and life, and growing fear of new variants fuelled fear and uncertainty for the road ahead. While it remained unclear how long this new way of life would last, students with developmental disabilities continued to acknowledge and work through the highs and lows of the year alongside peers and classmates. With ten months of experience adjusting to online, in-person or hybrid learning, students quickly adjusted to the ongoing uncertainty of 2021. With vaccines on the horizon in early 2021, a sense of hope was created for many students and families longing for normalcy.

The work of inclusive post-secondary education pushes against deep-rooted systemic devaluation of adults with developmental disabilities. This devaluation has often guided people with developmental disabilities into traditional programs related to their perceived capability and worth. Inclusive post-secondary education challenges this narrative daily.

This year many students with developmental disabilities continued to pursue the good things in life through incredible opportunities. Students continued to participate with sports teams, student residences, ambassador clubs and councils, co-ops and practicums, meaningful employment, relocated to new communities for school, all the while discovering their adult identities in unprecedented times. In addition to academics and student life demands, employment remained a high priority for many students. Throughout the school year, approximately 75% of students were gainfully employed.

Despite the many challenges the past year has presented, continued growth and opportunities for students with developmental disabilities were pursued. A direct reflection of the 30 years of innovation and the evolving practice of inclusive post-secondary education, Inclusion Alberta successfully obtained additional dollars from the Government of Alberta to increase student opportunities across the province. The expansion will allow student opportunities to grow within existing post-secondary institutions and create the opportunity for growth with new post-secondary partners. Expansion within existing partnerships resulted in an increase in the student complement at the following initiatives: Red Deer Polytechnic, NAIT, The King's University, Medicine Hat College, University of Lethbridge, and Lakeland College. The inclusive post-secondary education leadership team is also pursuing two new post-secondary partnerships. In addition to increasing the possibilities for adults with developmental disabilities to pursue higher education, the expansion dollars also included additional positions, including one part-time position committed to quality assurance across the province as the number of staff supporting students has grown steadily over the past three years.

## Student's Success and Inclusion

A student who completed their studies from MacEwan University, interviewed for and was hired at The Pride Centre of Edmonton, where they will be a Program Coordinator for 2SLGBTQIA seniors at SAGE. They are incredibly passionate about both 2SLGBTQIA issues and advocacy and have been looking into other ways to become more involved in the community. This student has also been taking time to connect with their coworkers and gain new information at the Downtown Library to become more aware of disability, Indigenous, and 2SLGBTQIA issues that require advocacy.



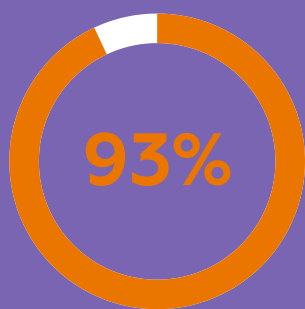
The Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP) initiative fostered a connection with the Associate Dean of Trades, who oversees the Cook Apprentice program. The Dean and lead Program Instructor were excited at the prospects of including a student supported by the initiative. After learning more about the potential applicant, and his interest in the Cook Apprentice program, he was successfully accepted into the apprentice program. This will be the first time a student has been accepted into an apprenticeship as an audit student within the school of trades at RDP. The student is very passionate about cooking and is looking forward to improving their skills with various cuisines and getting a job as a cook in a popular restaurant one day.

The Initiative at Olds College, in partnership with the Animal Science program, formally accepted a student to begin in fall 2021. The student is enrolled in courses from the Veterinary Medical Receptionist and the Veterinary Technical Assistant programs. The student is very excited to have the opportunity to study at Olds College and is already working in the field with a local Veterinarian Office doing some animal care.

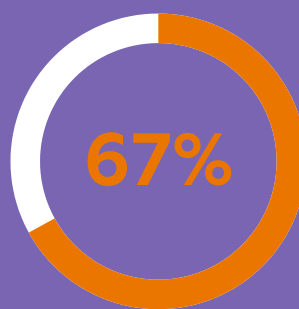
## Student Employment

As many post-secondary institutions continued to have prolonged periods of online learning and reduced opportunity for student life connections, employment played an essential role for many students. Although the pandemic continued to present employment challenges in 2021, many students with developmental disabilities were highly successful in obtaining meaningful employment. This year a growing number of students were employed throughout the year in addition to meeting their academic commitments. In the early stages of the pandemic, employment helped create a bit of normalcy in the rhythms of many students' day-to-day lives; this continued to be vital to the wellness of many students.

Like all post-secondary students, working in addition to being a student provides financial steadiness and the opportunity to connect with others during a time that has been incredibly isolating and lonely. Some students obtained their first paid job, while others worked multiple jobs in addition to completing their studies. Some students were in person in customer-facing jobs, with others required to start jobs online instead of in person or shifting working days to office share with co-workers. Completing post-secondary education with a job secured or the prospects of meaningful employment on the horizon is the hope of any post-secondary student, including students with developmental disabilities. COVID-19 has expedited conversations with students and their families or network to create more intentionality of employment within a student's vision.



**Students that  
completed their  
studies and were  
gainfully employed**

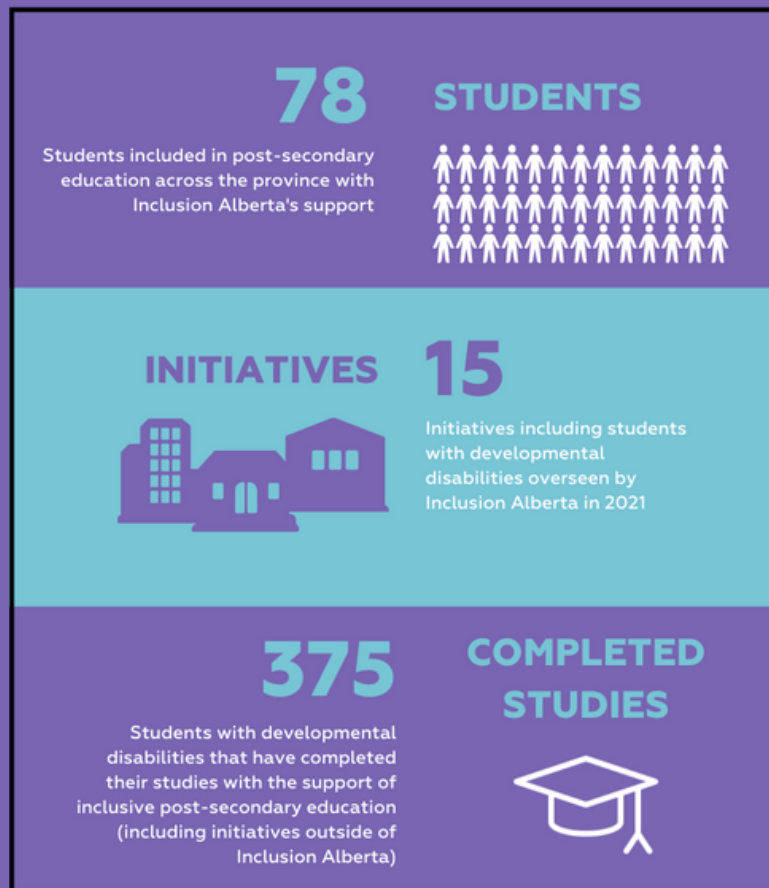


**Students that  
completed their  
studies and were  
gainfully employed in  
their field of study**

### Initiatives Currently Including Students

- Ambrose University\*
- Athabasca University
- Bow Valley College\*
- Concordia University of Edmonton\*
- Keyano College
- Lakeland College\*
- Lethbridge Community College
- MacEwan University\*
- Medicine Hat College\*
- Mount Royal University
- NorQuest College\*
- Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT)\*
- Northwestern Polytechnic\*
- Olds College\*
- Prairie Bible College
- Portage College\*
- Red Deer Polytechnic \*
- St. Mary's University College
- The King's University \*
- University of Alberta, Augustana Campus\*
- University of Alberta
- University of Calgary
- University of Lethbridge\*

\*Initiatives operated by Inclusion Alberta



### Expansion Within Inclusive Post-Secondary Education:

Red Deer Polytechnic, The King's University, NAIT, Medicine Hat College, University of Lethbridge, and Lakeland College.

A tremendous opportunity that was created through this expansion was the creation of contractual student positions for students requiring 1-1 support in accessing post-secondary education. This has historically been a barrier for students with developmental disabilities that require physical support in navigating college life daily, as well as personal care in addition to academic support. Additional 1-1 student positions were created at Lakeland College, Northwestern Polytechnic (formerly GPRC), The King's University, and Ambrose University.

- New partnership with OLDS College- Fall 2021
- 2021 saw the budding of partnership with five trades programs. Red Deer Polytechnic, Northwestern Polytechnic have already begun to include students within the trades. Medicine Hat College and NAIT will begin to include students within the trades in 2022.

## Faculty Development Training at Olds College

This year saw the delivery of faculty development training at the newest institution to include students with developmental disabilities, Olds College. Over two days in June and July 2021, faculty from five different schools, as well as learning strategists and other administration, attended the session to explore the following topics:

- Social Model of Disability and an Introduction to Inclusive Post-Secondary Education
- The history of people with developmental disabilities
- Inclusive Instructional Practice
- Promoting Meaningful Inclusion on Campus and Beyond

As the college prepares to welcome learners with developmental disabilities into classes this fall, there was a strong desire and interest in connecting with other experienced faculty to ensure they provided the best support possible to students. Wendy McDonald and Laurie Hunt were gracious enough to present and share their individual stories from their perspectives as parents', and Laurie having a role as a faculty member at NAIT. The following feedback was shared following the training:

*"I learned a lot over the 2 days. I feel more confident in being able to include students with developmental disabilities. I operate from a strengths-based approach to life and learning so much of what was shared affirmed my worldview. I think I understand better how to modify a course to meet a student's learning needs and that being creative is key! "Assume competence, authenticity, evaluation, and trial and error" are great signposts to stay on track and stay positive. As always, the relationship between the instructor, student, and support team is essential for success."*

*"I believe the information will support me tremendously - it truly set the stage and gave me a big picture overview of what to potentially expect, why inclusion is important, and how to support a student with disabilities. I feel that I have great support and connections to reach out to if I need support come the Fall."*

## Staff Development and Resources

Over the past few years, inclusive post-secondary education has seen tremendous growth due to ongoing expansion and has been challenged to evolve our practice in light of the challenges presented by the global pandemic. When the lives of so many paused in March 2020, two pieces of our practice became inherently clear for team members. When a student's whole identity is connected to a place, and there is minimal connection outside of the post-secondary institution, there is a significant risk of loneliness and isolation. It also amplified the rich opportunities being better connected within a student's local community might hold. The second learning was the importance of being gainfully employed while pursuing higher education when possible. Students who were gainfully employed during the pandemic experienced less loneliness and isolation and continued to have a strong sense of purpose each day that online learning did not provide for many students. Our team has seen a direct correlation between providing a high-quality staff development series and weekly provincial network meetings to better employment outcomes and rich relationships of students and their peers.

Through the bolstering of staff resources and training, we saw a direct benefit in the high-quality support students receive. As noted above, employment during the past year played a significant role in students sustaining connection to others and authenticating the overall student experience.

### **Conclusion:**

The past year was filled with evolving circumstances that continued to challenge and grow the work of inclusive post-secondary education. New students with developmental disabilities began their post-secondary journey, while others completed their respective studies and began the next phase of their life as post-secondary alumni working alongside peers during these unprecedented times. There continued to be steady growth and increased opportunities for students with developmental disabilities. One new post-secondary institution began to include students with developmental disabilities; two trades programs began to welcome students in fall 2021, with two more planning to include students with developmental disabilities in 2022. Over the course of this year, new programs of study within institutions partnering with Inclusion Alberta opened their cohort to students with developmental disabilities to pursue their dreams despite the uncertainty of COVID-19. This success is a direct result of the strong partnerships with post-secondary institutions that have continued to develop and remain strong allies committed to furthering the agenda of inclusion by ensuring classrooms include learners with developmental disabilities. Families remain a strong part of the underpinning of the work within inclusive post-secondary education. This year proved to be truly inspirational with many families connecting with post-secondary team members and other families to explore the visioning process for their family member with a developmental disability.

None of this would have been possible without the inspiring team of talented young professionals Inclusion Alberta has developed or the committed efforts of our Inclusive Post-Secondary Leadership Team. Special thanks to Regional Coordinators Shawna Francis, Jaime Skidmore, Madeline Ouellette, Jessica Brandsma, and Kristina McGovern.

**Submitted by**  
**Charmaine McIntyre**  
**Provincial Director, Inclusive**  
**Post-Secondary Education**

## COMMUNITY INCLUSION INITIATIVE (Inclusive Education & Youth for Inclusion)

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The Community Inclusion Initiative (CII) seeks to support people with developmental disabilities and their families to advance a good life fully included in community. The Federally funded CII grant enables the Provincial and Territorial Associations of Inclusion Canada to determine regional needs and priorities and take action to improve the inclusion of individuals with developmental disabilities in their community. This grant has allowed Inclusion Alberta to employ 1.5 Inclusion Education Consultants who support school districts, teachers, and families to access a high-quality inclusive education as well as to support the activities of Inclusion Alberta's Youth for Inclusion.

### **Inclusive Education**

Good quality, accessible Kindergarten-to-Grade 12 inclusive education can be foundational for families seeking to set their children on a normative pathway. Inclusive education creates opportunities for schools, and community more broadly, to develop their capacity for including individuals with developmental disabilities, which ultimately bolsters the broader inclusion movement. When children are educated in their neighbourhood schools alongside their same-aged friends and peers, rich opportunities for learning, relationship-building, and community capacity building emerge. In school, children learn about themselves, try new things, build, and deepen connections with friends and experience citizenship and belonging outside their families, sometimes for the first time. The experience of moving through the grades with classmates is a safe environment for students to make mistakes, learn life lessons, and overcome challenges. While this is the norm for most children, those families seeking an inclusive education in their neighbourhood schools often experience barriers and challenges in accessing these high-quality school experiences for their children with developmental disabilities.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has continued to impact many aspects of life in Alberta, including schools. The possibility for a sudden change to online learning has required schools and teachers to plan differently and has created greater complexity in planning for students with developmental disabilities included in school. The Inclusive Education Consultants provided timely support to teachers and school teams to assist in intentional and thoughtful planning through this uncertainty. The Inclusive Education Consultants were, at times, able to support in-person learning for students with developmental disabilities even when many of their classmates were learning at home in cases where students required accommodations or supports that were difficult to implement online. In other instances, the Inclusive Education Consultants supported teachers to plan to include their students with developmental disabilities in online learning. In each case, the Inclusive Education Consultants supported families to maintain their vision of an inclusive education even when school was barely recognizable due to the constant flux and uncertainty of the pandemic.

This year saw parents having to make individual decisions beyond government and school-board mandates, particularly for students at increased risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19. Some parents chose to keep their children out of school and learning online due to the significant risk of illness. Others chose to send their children back to the classroom, so as not to risk their child's inclusion, especially with friends and classmates. The demand for parents to weigh health considerations against meaningful inclusion put many parents in an impossible position, especially given that online learning made learning more challenging. Parents rely on school while they work and staying home indefinitely was not possible for many parents. In addition, many supports, for example from educational assistants or other school support, was often unpredictable or could not be translated online. Schools struggled with staffing and operational challenges leaving far too often children with developmental disabilities with little to no access to attending school.

This uncertainty and anticipated need to pivot quickly online required schools and families to communicate effectively and come to reasonable compromises to provide as much continuity of learning as possible. While effective communication has always been crucial to a quality inclusive education, when parents or other adults took on the responsibilities of coordinating and overseeing the home learning, effective communication between home and school became increasingly critical. With the support of the Inclusive Education Consultants, schools and families have developed novel communication strategies and collaborative approaches over the course of this year that will benefit students in the years to come.

In addition to working with educators and administrators, the Inclusive Education Consultants have provided broad support to families this year, especially given that families were more involved in their children's education than in previous years. As the school systems remained nimble in the face of ever-changing pandemic-related restrictions, parents were often asked to take on duties of teachers and had to exchange ideas and information to support student learning at home and in school. Parents also required more frequent consultations to sustain their vision of high quality inclusive education. The Inclusive Education Consultants work closely with parents on an ongoing basis and met with families 130 times during the year to provide information, guidance, and consultation, increasing families' capacity to collaborate and advocate.

This year involved fewer presentations to universities or community groups and a greater emphasis on supporting individual families to sustain their vision for meaningful inclusion in school. Inclusion Alberta hosted the annual Family Conference online due to the pandemic, including a full-day session with Paula Kluth, a world-renowned keynote speaker on inclusive education, on the topic of "The Problem with Behaviour Problems: Supporting Students with Autism & Other Disabilities," on April 16, 2021, with over 246 participants attending.

Over the last year, the Inclusive Education Consultants provided over 121 consultations to 14 schools across nine districts across the province. The Inclusive Education Consultants were engaged with over 50 teachers, administrators, and support staff. The Inclusive Education Consultants also provided seven additional presentations to schools and universities that reached 60 school administrators, teachers, educational assistants, and school leaders in their Master of Education program.

Two local family organizations have developed inclusive education collectives to build their community's capacity to resource families and provide targeted advocacy in their respective regions. The Inclusive Education Consultants attend monthly meetings, provide feedback and work as allies to these two collectives.

## Youth for Inclusion

Since its establishment in 2016, Youth for Inclusion has continued to foster activism through a social justice lens for youth passionate about furthering the agenda of inclusion and diversity within the community to include greater representation of youth with developmental disabilities. With continued funding made possible through the federally funded Community Inclusion Initiative (CII) grant, this year youth leaders had the opportunity to explore the harmful impact of segregation and marginalization to people with developmental disabilities within their local communities and engage in vital conversations regarding leadership, advocacy and understanding unconscious bias. Through guided conversation with the Youth Facilitator, a youth leader created a workplan for 2021-2022 that intentionally addressed the tensions and themes explored by the youth.

Like many youth groups, the opportunity to be engaged in person was incredibly challenging given the evolving health restrictions and a desire to keep everyone safe during uncertain times. Youth for Inclusion continued to find ways to stay connected despite the continued restrictions. Youth for Inclusion held seven meetings over the year, consisting of monthly meetings and space to plan events. Goals for the year included successfully hosting their 5th annual fall conference. In addition to the Youth Forum and Youth Conference held annually, youth leaders participated in a youth-led event supporting leaders to discover or rediscover their "why inclusion" and developed a speaker's series. The coming year's focus is community engagement and social capital in preparation for the youth forum at the 2022 Inclusion Alberta Family Conference.

During the year, Youth for Inclusion worked alongside the community partner TakingITGlobal. TakingITGlobal is an organization focused on connecting youth passionate about activism and enacting change in local communities. As a result of this partnership, youth leaders applied for funding to host events to inspire action in youth interested in the inclusion movement. As the grants provided to youth leaders had soft parameters on projects generating change, Youth for Inclusion leaders felt it would be impactful to use the funds to bring in speakers who can support youth leaders and participants explore ways to effectively bring positive change to their local communities.

Events were supported by the Youth Facilitator, who ensured that youth leaders enacting events through the rising youth grants had the support and resources required to complete their projects successfully.

In the early spring, youth leaders felt inspired by their perspectives on why it is important that youth with and without disabilities join the Youth for Inclusion movement, given the larger social justice movements emerging around the world. The Youth Facilitator and two youth leaders collaborated and created a blog post for Inclusion Alberta's Connections page.

Excerpt from the blog post:

*"I am a 3rd-year student at the University of Alberta working on a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in History and Anthropology. I am also working on a certificate in community service learning. I am a passionate advocate working in the social services field and aspire to work in law in the future to advocate for individuals with disabilities and children and youth."*

*"I think it's extremely important for all youth to participate in the inclusion movement not only to help each other but also to educate ourselves on different perspectives and ways of life, allowing ourselves to step out of our comfort zone and socialize with others. I feel like the pandemic has taken away that sort of innocence of just talking to people and we have begun to lose that social touch. At every monthly Youth for Inclusion meeting we have, the brainstorming and sharing of ideas have really struck me. I feel very appreciative that I get to collaborate and share creativity with such amazing people. I love how we encourage ourselves to think bigger, dream bigger and to not only think of ourselves but of others. The sense of selflessness is really inspiring."*

The Youth Forum at the 2021 Family Conference was a success following the cancellation of the 2020 Family Conference. The 2021 Youth Forum was the first virtual Youth Forum hosted by Youth for Inclusion. Approximately 12-15 youth with and without disabilities participated in an array of conference sessions such as: Don't We Already Do Inclusion?, Creating Better Schools for All, Enabling Hopeful and Inclusive Lives in Difficult Times, Fostering a Family Led Movement for Inclusion: Taking Action Collectively, and First Nations: Challenges, Progress and Aspirations. Following the morning sessions, youth participated in two other youth-only sessions: Restraint and Seclusion in Schools: A Reality That Continues to Be Experienced by Children with Developmental Disabilities, and Music and Mental Wellness and Listen with Your Heart.

Following the growing confidence of youth leaders in hosting the Youth Forum in the spring, youth leaders hosted the 5th annual youth conference in November 2021. The conference focused on advocacy, leadership, and inclusive education. Inclusive education remained an area of interest for many leaders following the Youth Forum session in the spring. The event welcomed Nathan Ip (school board trustee) and Esther Dimilanta (Rising Youth representative) to deliver an interactive morning with the 19 youth leaders and guests.

While the impact of COVID-19 continues to impact the activeness of many youth leaders, there has been an increase in new youth leaders. By planning the upcoming speaker series and focusing on engaging with community partners, youth leaders have begun to identify opportunities to approach community groups that they are connected to and share about the work of Youth for Inclusion. Youth leaders see immense value in developing partnerships with existing youth groups to further the inclusion agenda.



**15**

Youth Conference participants

**7**

Youth General Meetings

**20**

Youth Forum participants

**2**

Youth Reflective Conversation Sessions

Submitted by

**Lissa Horyn**

Inclusive Education  
Consultant

**Aqeela Khalid**

Inclusive Education  
Consultant

**Kevin Veenstra**

Youth for Inclusion

## FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRES

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Darrell Cook Family Managed Supports Resource Centre



Supporting individuals and families in planning and implementing meaningful supports to enable an inclusive life in community.

Inclusion Alberta Family Resource Centre - Grande Prairie



Supporting individuals and families in planning and implementing meaningful supports to enable an inclusive life in community.

This year brought a welcome addition to Inclusion Alberta and Inclusion Grande Prairie with the opening in May 2021 of the Inclusion Alberta Family Resource Centre Grande Prairie and Area covering the Northwest region of Alberta. The much-anticipated Centre supported 26 youth and 27 adults for a total of 53 families since May 2021. The Centre has also begun to reach out to partners in the community to collaborate in supporting both youth and adults with developmental disabilities and their families in Grande Prairie and surrounding areas.

The Darrell Cook Family Managed Supports Resource Centre supported 48 new families, a 41 percent increase from 2020 in Calgary and area, for a total of 715 since the opening of the Resource Centre in 2010, accounting for just over half of all Family Managed Supports (FMS) contracts (1,3861). The centre was connected on average with 22 new and returning families at any given time.

The foundational support provided by the Resource Centres focuses on helping families create a vision and construct and implement plans to realize the dreams of an inclusive meaningful life for their loved ones with developmental disabilities. For those families using FMS and Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) funding, flexibility has never been so important as this past year necessitated the ability to pivot plans and respond quickly to changes in health measures, government policies and the closure of many community activities. Flexibility created space to assess risk tolerance and allowed families to take small and large steps toward their vision while safeguarding their loved ones. The resilience of families who were exhausted was highly visible this past year when family members experienced multiple losses of community connections, homes, and employment. Hope was present as families garnered strength to move forward through the pandemic to pursue a good life for their family member with support from the Resource Centres.

The pandemic highlighted the importance of meeting families where they are at to intentionally plan, create and carry out individualized blueprints for an inclusive life. Through the winter of 2021, while shutdowns were in place, families once again redesigned supports for individuals to engage in virtual platforms to maintain existing friendships, find new possibilities for recreation and involvement in interests and on-line community connections. As vaccines became available and some restrictions were lifted, individuals returned to gyms, faith communities, work, and volunteer positions while others found new jobs. Throughout the year, dreams of moving out of the family home and creating a home was realized for many individuals as some moved into their own home or rented an apartment while others moved in with supportive roommates.

In addition to planning the Resource Centres supported families to apply for supports from FSCD/PDD, help families apply for the Critical Worker Benefits, fielded questions on vaccines, payroll services, mileage for staff, and Workers' Compensation.

The impact on individuals and families finding qualified staff through the pandemic cannot be overlooked. With the landscape of support workers changing during the pandemic, a critical shortage has left individuals with developmental disabilities without support at work, at home and in the community, creating further isolation. Families have had to leave or rearrange work schedules creating additional stress. The Resource Centres have worked extensively with families over the year to discuss interests and support needs and explore numerous methods to find staff, supporting families to explore avenues to advertise, review their networks, and help families interview potential staff.

## **Darrell Cook Family Managed Supports Resource Centre**

**48**

**New families supported  
in 2021 (a 41% increase from 2020)**

**22**

**New and returning families the  
centre is connected to, on  
average, at any given time**

## **Inclusion Alberta Family Resource Centre - Grande Prairie -**

**26**

**Youth supported by the centre in 2021**

**27**

**Adults supported by  
the centre in 2021**

## **FMS Series**

The Resource Centres conducted three sessions over 2021 offering Visioning and Planning, Exploring Opportunities for Creating Employment and Creating and Facilitating Relationships through Community Engagement. The sessions, offered virtually to families, FMS staff and professionals across Alberta were well attended with a total of 207. Families expressed the sessions were a welcome opportunity during the pandemic to connect with other families and create space to share ideas and make concrete plans with staff.

Inclusion Alberta's Family Resource Centre Grande Prairie and Area offered six sessions locally to families in the surrounding areas during the summer. Sessions offered virtually included an Introduction to the Family Resource Centre and Normative Pathways, Challenging Limited Beliefs, and What are FSCD and FMS supports? Attendance for the three sessions totalled 76 participants. These sessions were delivered twice, ensuring flexibility for families and individuals by offering daytime and evening sessions.

## **Website**

During 2021, families and funds administrators throughout the Province of Alberta embraced The Online Guide to Using FMS to Support an Inclusive Life as evidenced by the 7,400 page views this past year. FMS Resources, information on FMS, transitions and family testimonials were among the most popular sites viewed.

## **Community Engagement Team Training**

The Provincial Coordinator of the Resource Centres, in collaboration with the Community Inclusion Facilitator, created and implemented an eight-week training series for the Community Engagement team in the fall of 2021 to build capacity within the team to support families to create a meaningful life for their family members with developmental disabilities. Topics included visioning and planning, fostering relationships, employment, home, PDD/FSCD, becoming an employer and creating capacity. The Community Engagement team works collaboratively with families and individuals across the life span to vision, plan, and engage in the community to build an inclusive life. This team works across Alberta in similar roles supporting person-centred planning.

**Submitted by**

**Pat Winter**

**Provincial Coordinator,  
Resource Centres**

**Billie Jack**

**Provincial Director  
of Advocacy and Community  
Engagement**

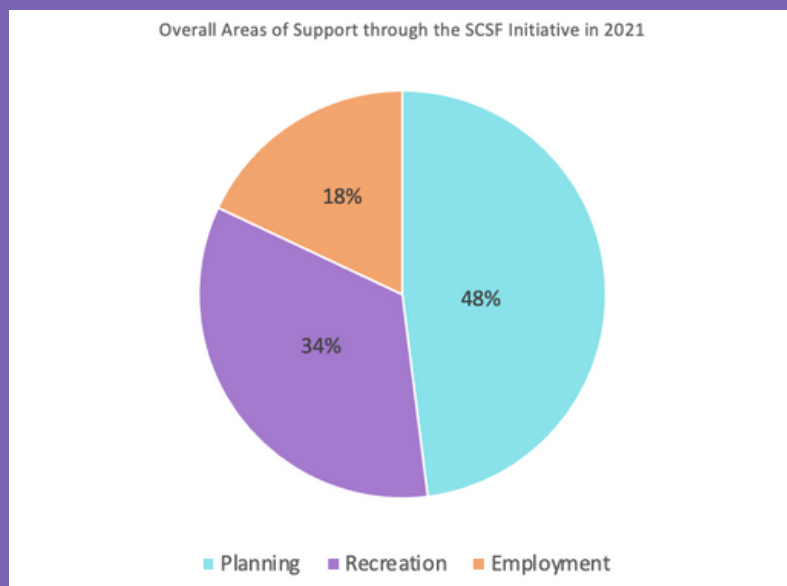
## SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES: STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

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The Supportive Communities: Strengthening Families (SCSF) initiative in Calgary and area works to support children and youth with developmental disabilities up to the age of 18 to be included in community opportunities that align with their own passions, interests, and talents. The SCSF Facilitator provides families with support in taking the necessary steps to facilitate their family member's inclusion in a variety of activities and opportunities such as participation in community recreation and leisure, part-time employment, post-secondary education, and membership in clubs, groups, and faith communities. The Facilitator may also support families in recruiting and hiring support staff; at times, this may include assisting families to advocate on behalf of their family member to secure the funding required to obtain the best support. The Facilitator also works closely with other initiatives, in particular the Darrell Cook Family Managed Supports Resource Centre, the Youth Employment Partnership, and the Inclusive Post-Secondary Education initiative in order to best support families and individuals. The SCSF initiative also engages with community organizations and businesses to grow their ability and capacity for fostering the inclusion of children and youth with developmental disabilities.

Throughout this past year, there has continued to be significant challenges needing to be navigated and overcome due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a testament to the strength of families and the communities of which they are a part that we have seen so many successes and so many possibilities realized throughout the year of 2021. Although government restrictions, health and safety regulations, closures, occasional bouts of virtual schooling, capacity mandates, and masking/social distancing protocols remained in place for much of the year, there were some definite bright spots to acknowledge. As with the previous year, the SCSF initiative still needed to be imaginative in what community inclusion could look like, but as many community spaces were better equipped this year to act accordingly vis-à-vis safety recommendations (ie. moving online, preparing for smaller group sizes, utilizing outdoor spaces, etc.), pivoting as opposed to simply cancelling programming was more the norm this year.

Amidst the changes and challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the SCSF initiative in Calgary and area provided support to 30 families in total throughout the past year. Twenty-one of these families were actively receiving support for planning – such as developing a vision for inclusion, recruiting staff to help realize this vision, and focusing on strengths, interests, and passions – and support for being included in community through things like recreation and employment at the end of 2021. There were also a number of families seeking support with hiring staff this past year, as the COVID-19 pandemic has introduced many additional challenges to a process that was already a struggle to some.



The SCSF Facilitator presented over Zoom on 14 occasions within the community throughout the year in order to promote a greater understanding of community inclusion, as well as raise awareness of Inclusion Alberta and our work, and the SCSF initiative in particular, with the hope of connecting to more families and community partners across the city. This included presentations for the Calgary Zoo, the YMCA Healthy Living program, the City of Medicine Hat, Families Matter, the Calgary Resource Fair for Youth and Young Adults with Developmental Disabilities, and Calgary Adapted Hub. This also included numerous families and community members themselves who were hoping to learn more about how they can support inclusion, including at the annual Family Conference, which took place virtually in 2021, and an Inspiring Inclusion session. The SCSF Facilitator was also connected with multiple individuals throughout Calgary and area to support them in creating more inclusive places and spaces for the children and youth in their communities. Some of these connections were initiated by the SCSF Facilitator, others were generated by the Youth Employment Partnership Coordinator in the pursuit of employment, while others still were discovered by families based on what was available in their community and what best fit with their family member's interests. A number of inclusive opportunities that advanced their vision of inclusion came out of these relationships. Amongst these were part-time employment opportunities at a local dollar store in Airdrie, a grocery store in Calgary, and a second-hand store also in Calgary. Furthermore, there were a number of recreation opportunities for the children and youth in and around Calgary, including one teenager being included in a weekly circus class with a theatre society, one child taking weekly drawing classes with the Young Rembrandts, one teenager participating in a basketball camp in their community over the holidays, and one child trying out a bike camp with Pedalheads over the summer. With a hoped for return to more in person opportunities in the year to come, the SCSF initiative looks forward to continuing to expand inclusive community opportunities for children and youth with developmental disabilities in 2022.

Submitted by  
**Mackenzie Spencer**  
SCSF Facilitator

## FUND DEVELOPMENT

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Thank you to all who supported Inclusion Alberta in 2021. Despite again being limited to holding our 'Changing Lives, Changing Communities' fundraising events virtually, we were able to exceed our fundraising target for 2021. We are deeply grateful for the support.

After having missed a year in 2020 due to COVID-19 Inclusion Alberta, in partnership with Inclusion Lloydminster, held a virtual event in May. A total of \$112,900 was raised with nine new members secured for the Dream Maker Society.

Inclusion Alberta's virtual 'Changing Lives, Changing Communities' event took place in November. We are thrilled to announce we raised \$439,000 and secured 19 new members to our Dream Maker Society with another 12 current Dream Maker's renewing their commitment for another five years. The impact of donors who commit to five years has a life changing difference on our organization and allows us to provide the necessary and critical support to individuals and families. We now have 230 members in our Dream Maker Society.

We would like to acknowledge Concordia University for supporting our event by sponsoring for the second time. Thanks also goes to ATB Financial for becoming a sponsor of the 'Changing Lives, Changing Communities' event this year. We are deeply grateful for the support of both organizations. As a result of the support from Concordia and ATB all the money raised at the event goes directly to supporting individuals and families.





### **50/50 Raffle**

Leading up to and during our virtual Family Conference we held two 50/50 raffles. We raised \$4,000 for Inclusion Alberta and two lucky winners won \$2,500 each.



### **Peter Lee Golf Classic**

The second annual Peter Lee Golf Classic was held on September 16th. We can't adequately express our thanks to Andre Charrios and Foster Park Brokers for holding this tournament which raised \$15,000.00 for Inclusion Alberta. Keep your eye out for details on next year's tournament.

### **Mailout**

In December we sent requests to donors who had previously donated between 2017 – 2020. We emailed 785 requests and mailed 394. As a result, we received 30 donations for a total of \$15,525.

Throughout the year we are incredibly fortunate to receive support in the most amazing and unexpected ways. One example that touched our hearts was Connor, a young man from Calgary who wanted to raise money to support Inclusion Alberta. His goal was to raise \$2,300 for Inclusion Alberta by climbing a 23m hill 100 times to equal the height of Mount Yamnuska in Alberta. On October 8th, 2021, Connor completed his quest and exceeded his fundraising goal. As a result, \$3,801 was raised for Inclusion Alberta. Congratulations and thanks to Connor!

Heartfelt thanks to all who donated to Inclusion Alberta in 2021. Your support is the reason we are able to continue to make a life changing difference in the lives of individuals and families with developmental disabilities. Thank you.

**Submitted by**

**Wendy McDonald**

**Chief Operating Officer**

## 2021 DREAM MAKERS

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**This group of community-minded people from all walks of life has chosen to support the hopes and aspirations of Albertans with developmental disabilities and their families. Inclusion Alberta Dream Makers commit to a minimum five-year financial contribution.**

Amy Abbott  
Erin Acton  
John & Robin Acton  
Janet Adams  
Agland  
Leela Aheer (Aheer Studio of Performance)  
Mukhtar Ali  
ALSA Road Construction  
Georgina & T.J. Altman  
Stacey & Quentin Andrews  
Dawn Angus  
Ray Axworthy  
Chris & Carolyn Baier  
Donna Barrett & Bruce Uditsky  
Barrett Consulting (Robert & Pam Barrett)  
Lauren & Karen Bartell  
Laura & Arnie Bechard  
Lauren Bechard  
Jamie & Todd Befus  
Natalie & Mark Beland  
Eric Bennett  
Jennifer Black-Moir & Meric Moir  
Larry & Lynn Blenkin  
Gwen Bond  
Trish Bowman & Tim Weinkauff  
Monica Braat  
Breakpoint Solutions (Greg & Heidi Hadubiak)  
Brixton Shoes & Accessories (Sherry Gould & Mindy Hawthorne)  
Don Buchanan  
Capexco Inc.  
John Carle  
Brian Carnahan & Christine Rendell

Dan & Kathryn Cavanagh  
Andre & Lynne Charrois  
Laura Charrois  
Patrick Charrois  
Anthony & Melanie Chow  
Nicole Chu  
Clark Builders  
John Cloutier  
Canadian National Resources Limited  
Sheilagh Cook  
Angus Cooke  
Ian & Catherine Cooke  
Robert Corrigan & Barb Holland  
Ed & Mavis Crossland  
Jeremy Crossman  
John Decoine  
Delisle Enterprises Ltd. (Katherine Delisle)  
Ray & Donna Desjardins  
Dieleman-Bradley Family  
Kelley Doerksen  
Dan & Marlene Doherty  
John & Anne Driedger  
Driving Force  
Mark & Kim Dupperon  
Kim Edwards & Dave Kinders  
Bill & Cecilia Engelage  
Shawn & Vanessa Ergang  
Julie & Rick Evans  
David & Jodie Ewasiuk  
Cynthia & John Farmer  
Brian & Susan Farrell  
Colin Foote & Sherri Husch-Foote  
Katie Foss  
Foster Park Brokers Inc.  
Jackie & Marty Fowler

## 2021 DREAM MAKERS

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Shawna Francis & Thomas Lee  
Penny & Niels Frederiksen  
Arne & One Fulton  
Mark & Amanda Gauthier  
Louise Gendreau & Robert Howard  
Kim Gunderson  
Trudy & Murray Hames  
Todd & Janine Hames  
Matthew & Courtney Hammond  
David Harding  
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Mark Nolin  
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Kristyn Okell  
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Melissa & Robert Oracheski  
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**Inclusion Alberta is grateful for all the support it received for the 2021 year and we want to acknowledge the following individuals, organizations and groups for their contributions:**

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John Cloutier

Concordia University

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Peter Lee Golf Classic

Rexall Care Network

The Mutual Fire Insurance Company of British Columbia

The Tao Foundation (Lorne & Patricia Gordon)

Cathy & Rob Vogelgesang

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# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, BOARD OF DIRECTORS AFFILIATE MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS & INCLUSION ALBERTA FOUNDATION BOARD

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## Executive Committee

|                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| President.....       | Monica Braat      |
| Past-President.....  | Barb MacIntyre    |
| Vice-President.....  | Keith Moore       |
| Vice-President.....  | Tina Trigg        |
| Treasurer.....       | Donna Desjardins  |
| Member-at-Large..... | Trudy Hames       |
| Member-at-Large..... | Kathy Laycock     |
| Member-at-Large..... | Sarah Pereira     |
| Ex-Officio .....     | Trish Bowman, CEO |

## Board of Directors

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|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| President .....                                   | Monica Braat       |
| Past-President.....                               | Barb MacIntyre     |
| Vice-President .....                              | Keith Moore        |
| Vice-President.....                               | Tina Trigg         |
| Treasurer.....                                    | Donna Desjardins   |
| Ex-Officio.....                                   | Trish Bowman, CEO  |
| Director-at-Large.....                            | Bernadette Farrell |
| Director-at-Large .....                           | Trudy Hames        |
| Director-at-Large.....                            | Cathy Laycock      |
| Director-at-Large .....                           | Kathleen McHugh    |
| Director-at-Large.....                            | Braden Mole        |
| Director-at-Large .....                           | Sarah Pereira      |
| Director-at-Large.....                            | Melanie Williams   |
| AdaptAbilities.....                               | Eva McQuaid        |
| Capabilities Connection .....                     | Jessica Schurman   |
| Cohesive Communities.....                         | Amy Quintal        |
| Etana.....                                        | Wanda Cassidy      |
| Gateway Association for Community Living.....     | Norm McLeod        |
| Inclusion Calgary.....                            | Bill Dowhaluk      |
| Inclusion Edmonton Region .....                   | Kim Edwards        |
| Inclusion Foothills.....                          | Benjamin Bruce     |
| Inclusion Grande Prairie.....                     | DD Shaw            |
| Inclusion Lethbridge .....                        | Pamela Scorch      |
| Inclusion Lloydminster.....                       | Tami Smith         |
| Inclusion Medicine Hat.....                       | Amy Deck           |
| Inclusion Siksika .....                           | Tracy McHugh       |
| Inclusion St. Paul.....                           | Amil Shapka        |
| Inclusion Wetaskiwin .....                        | Denise Grimm       |
| Integrated Post-Secondary Education Society.....  | Laurie Peterson    |
| Marigold Enterprises Rehabilitation Services..... | Mary Goede-Kohn    |
| Parkland Community Living & Support Society ..... | Herb Franklin      |

### Board of Directors continued...

|                                                                          |                |
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| Progressive Alternatives Society of Calgary.....                         | Andrew Kryzan  |
| Selections.....                                                          | Jeffrey Friend |
| Skills Society.....                                                      | Hart Chapelle  |
| Southern Alberta Community Living Association.....                       | Anna Olson     |
| The GRIT Program .....                                                   | Andy Akle      |
| Transitions Rehabilitation Associations of<br>St. Albert & District..... | vacant         |

### Affiliate Member Associations (non-voting)

Ability Resource Centre  
Barrhead Association for Community Living  
Beehive Support Services  
Calgary Alternative Support Services, Inc. (CASS)  
Calgary Personal and Community Support Association  
Calgary Scope  
Capabilities Connection of Central Alberta Association  
Care Human Services – Grande Prairie  
Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre of Calgary  
Edmonton Down Syndrome Society  
Edmonton On Campus Adult Education Society  
Edson Scope  
Falher Friendship Corner Association  
Lifestyle Choices of Edmonton  
Southern Alberta Individualized Planning Association (SAIPA)  
St. Paul Abilities Network (SPAN)  
Taber Special Needs Society  
Ups and Downs – Calgary Down Syndrome Society  
Wainwright Association for Community Living

### Inclusion Alberta Foundation Board of Directors

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| VicePresident.....           | Tina Trigg        |
| Treasurer.....               | Donna Desjardins  |
| Honourary Member.....        | Don Anderson      |
| Inclusion Alberta Proxy..... | Keith Moore       |
| Ex-Officio .....             | Trish Bowman, CEO |

## INCLUSION ALBERTA STAFF

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### **Inclusion Alberta Leadership Team**

Chief Executive Officer - Trish Bowman

Chief Executive Officer Emeritus - Bruce Uditsky

Chief Operating Officer - Wendy McDonald

Provincial Director, Advocacy and Community Development - Billie Jack

Provincial Director, Inclusive Post-Secondary Education - Charmaine McIntyre

Provincial Director, Employment Partnerships - Trina Steed

Regional Director, Advocacy and Community Development - Catherine Oakleaf

Executive Assistant - Tara-Lee LaRose

Business Manager - Colleen Storms

### **Inclusion Alberta Support Team**

Operations Manager - Roy Pierson

Communications Coordinator - Sara Protasow

Fund Development Coordinator - Alyssa Banfield

Office Administrator - Chrissy Clark

Office Assistant, Edmonton - Shay Nickolet

Office Assistant, Edmonton - David Sobsey

Office Assistant, Calgary - Maggie Vovan

Librarian - Linda Cook

### **Inclusion Alberta Foundation**

Chief Operating Officer - Shawn Ergang

### **Advocacy**

Senior Advocate - Stacey Andrews

Advocate, Calgary - Saltanat Ashymova

Advocate, Edmonton - Kim Stirling

Advocate, Edmonton - vacant

Advocate, Grande Prairie - Lindsay Kelly\*

Advocate, Medicine Hat - vacant

Advocate, Red Deer/Wetaskiwin - Dawne Hammerschmidt

Advocate, St. Paul - vacant

Complex Needs Coordinator - Arne Fulton

Complex Needs Facilitator - Francisca Salifu

## **Community Engagement**

Community Engagement Provincial Coordinator - Aqeela Khalid\*

Community Engagement and Development Coordinator - Kate Hughson

Community Inclusion Facilitator, Edmonton - Caitlin Wray\*

Community Inclusion Facilitator, Edmonton and Youth for Inclusion - Kevin Veenstra

Darrell Cook Family Managed Support Resource Centre Coordinator - Pat Winter

Inclusion Alberta Family Resource Centre – Grande Prairie - Laura Gerow-Burrin

Supportive Communities Strengthening Families Coordinator - Edmonton, Caitlin Wray

Supportive Communities Strengthening Families Facilitator - Calgary, Mackenzie Spencer

## **Employment Partnerships**

Regional Employment Partnership Coordinator - Carla Hamarsnes

Rotary Employment Partnership Coordinator, Calgary - Katlyn McLaughlin

Rotary Employment Partnership Coordinator, Calgary - Karen Murray

Rotary Employment Partnership Coordinator, Calgary - Courtney Wilson

Rotary Employment Partnership Coordinator, Edmonton - Ryan Entz

Rotary Employment Partnership Coordinator, Edmonton - Brogan Gordon

Rotary Employment Partnership Coordinator, Edmonton - Lynn Kazairwe

Rotary Employment Partnership Coordinator, Edmonton - Jolanta Vermette

Rotary Employment Partnership Coordinator, Foothills - Kathy Johnstone

Rotary Employment Partnership Coordinator, Grande Prairie - Lindsay Kelly\*

Rotary Employment Partnership Coordinator, Lloydminster - Jenna Pellerin

Rotary Employment Partnership Coordinator, Red Deer - Gina Belich

Youth Employment Partnership Coordinator, Edmonton - Aliesha Hart Stone

Youth Employment Partnership Coordinator, Calgary - Jesse Crosby

## **Inclusive Education**

Inclusive Education Consultant - Lissa Horyn

Inclusive Education Consultant - Aqeela Khalid\*

## **Inclusive Post-Secondary Education**

Regional Coordinator, Inclusive Post-Secondary Education - Jessica Brandsma  
Regional Coordinator, Inclusive Post-Secondary Education - Shawna Francis  
Regional Coordinator, Inclusive Post-Secondary Education - Kristina McGovern\*  
Regional Coordinator, Inclusive Post-Secondary Education - Madeline Ouellette  
Regional Coordinator, Inclusive Post-Secondary Education - Jaime Skidmore  
Career Development Coordinator - Brittany Williams  
Ambrose University, Coordinator - Mo Hickman  
Ambrose University, Facilitator - Marya Abma  
Bow Valley College, Coordinator - Kristina McGovern\*  
Bow Valley College, Facilitator - Ashley Blackmore  
Concordia University, Coordinator - Brigjilda Berger  
Concordia University, Facilitator - Bradley Pierson  
Grande Prairie Regional College, Coordinator - Leanne Novosol  
Grande Prairie Regional College, Facilitator - Cailie Johnson  
Grande Prairie Regional College, Facilitator - Amber McNeeley-Fraser  
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Lakeland College, Facilitator - Desiree Bissonnette  
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MacEwan University, Facilitator - Cynthia Buller  
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Medicine Hat College, Coordinator - Adriana Todaro  
Medicine Hat College, Facilitator - Connie Hewitt  
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Red Deer Polytechnic, Facilitator - Kristin O’Connell  
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\*indicates staff with multiple roles/titles