



Calgary Seniors'

RESOURCE SOCIETY

Commitment. Dedication. Perseverance.

2016 Annual Report



Message from the President & Executive Director



2016 was a hard year for many people. The economy in Alberta continued to falter and many people in Calgary were struggling more than usual.

Calgary Seniors, like many other organizations, kicked off 2016 in a difficult spot. We came out of 2015 with a significant deficit; a deficit we had been carrying since the floods in 2013. We needed to recoup and improve our financial situation amid an economic downturn. We knew it would be a difficult fundraising year as the economy was depressed; many people and businesses were tapped out, barely surviving . . . or worse. Like most non-profits, we were also concerned about staff burnout, especially considering our growing client base and the increasing complexity of their needs.

However, we weren't willing to compromise on services to vulnerable seniors. We knew we needed to retain and recruit qualified, passionate employees, while improving our finances. There was a lot to be done in 2016, and we could not afford to fail. More importantly, our clients could not afford to have us fail. We were determined to succeed. We continued with our commitment and dedication at a time when others might have retrenched, held back or slowed down. We persevered and stayed focused on the goal. And at the end of 2016, we emerged stronger and more viable. We overcame that which seemed to be, at times, insurmountable.

PERSEVERANCE is the steadfastness in doing something, despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.

In 2016, Calgary Seniors persevered. We were steadfast and showed tenacity. We demonstrated unwavering commitment to our clients and remained dedicated to achieving our mission. We worked tirelessly to fundraise, educate, inform and rally. And we are proud of the results our team delivered. Not only did we recover from our 2015 deficit, but we laid a stronger financial foundation for 2017, a foundation we are continuing to grow.

Most importantly, we accomplished this while serving more seniors than we've ever served before. We launched new initiatives and established new partnerships. We recruited and trained hundreds of additional volunteers, growing our volunteer base from 900 to over 1200 in 12 months. We continued to be creative and innovative while taking calculated risks. Our strengths and contributions were recognized and rewarded with an increase in core funding and some new dollars to expand and enhance existing services. We forged new territory and seized opportunities.

Yes, Calgary Seniors did all that; but not without help. Thank you to our funders, our donors, our volunteers, our Board, our staff and the community. Together we demonstrated the effects of **collective impact**. We look forward to 2017 and beyond with enthusiasm and the same commitment, determination, perseverance and dedication to ensuring seniors in our city get the support and respect they deserve. Let's all continue to work together to make sure seniors in Calgary are not forgotten.

Calgary Seniors, providing a depth of support that creates meaningful and effective change in the overall well-being and quality of life for vulnerable seniors in Calgary.

Our Purpose

Calgary Seniors' Resource Society emerged in 1995 when three like-minded allied community organizations came together to better serve seniors in our city under one roof and under one name. Since then, the agency has continued to grow, evolve and innovate through collaborative partnerships and programming.

What has not changed, is the core reason Calgary Seniors is here: **to provide a depth of support that creates meaningful and effective change in the overall well-being and quality of life for vulnerable seniors** and to provide opportunities for members of the community to support them through meaningful volunteer engagement. We carry out our mission with practical, cost-effective programming that makes a difference and recognizes the unique concerns and challenges faced by older adults.

Poor health, dementia, mobility issues, poverty, isolation, loneliness, abuse, addictions, hoarding; no one plans to grow old and need help, but these are the realities for many seniors across our city.

At Calgary Seniors, we focus on prevention: dealing with core issues around social isolation, abuse and neglect, housing, transportation, and critical needs. Above all, we want to ensure that seniors are not forgotten or left behind. While governments, municipalities, the health care system, business and communities help meet some of the needs of our aging population, there still remains gaps in services and systems. This is where Calgary Seniors' Resource Society comes in.

Calgary Seniors is focused on being a part of the solution.

Working in collaboration with many other dedicated organizations to focus on real co-operation and real solutions, we are committed to continue moving forward with a view to creative solutions and collaboration across sectors, across levels of government and across economic, environmental and cultural barriers. To do anything less would be unacceptable.

The need in our city has never been greater.



The Difference We Make

Arthur's story, not unlike many of our clients, is one of suffering, sadness and isolation. One of Arthur's main challenges in moving forward is that he has Parkinson's disease, making it very hard for him to communicate and have others understand him. He is also on oxygen, which makes mobility and getting out into society difficult. He lacked any kind of social circle and felt completely disconnected and alone.

We matched Arthur with a new volunteer, Allison through our Friendly Visiting and Telephone Reassurance program in January of 2015. Right from the beginning, she was absolutely life changing for him. On one of their first visits, she took him for pancakes. For his 65th birthday, she took him to the Keg and made him a cake. In the Fall, she took him to Spruce Meadows to see the horses. With no friends or family in the city, Arthur was alone all the time before Allison came into his life. He had no way of being engaged in his community because he simply couldn't. "But Allison – she changed all of this" says Arthur, "she swooped in and gave me hope". She gave him a sense of belonging. She gave him a family. All of this would have been magnificent on its own, but Allison regularly goes one step further. She routinely advocates for Arthur and communicates with our office on his behalf. She has taken an active role in Arthur's life. Without her incredible empathy and commitment, we don't know where Arthur would be right now.



The role that our volunteers play in shaping, changing and improving the lives of our clients cannot be overlooked or diminished. "If it weren't for volunteers assisting, supporting and just being a friend to our clients, we would not have the life altering stories that make all our jobs so rich. When I was asked who should be the recipient of this year's Donna Seland Ambassador Award, my mind immediately went to Allison" says Zoe, on our Volunteer Team. "She works quietly, never asking for praise or recognition for her dedication to Arthur. She fights for a gentleman who has been stripped of so much. She is a vivacious and strong woman. People like Allison, who give selflessly, are the true heroes of all our lives. Volunteers like Allison are what keeps us going when the sadness of people's circumstances and situations seem overwhelming. So thank you; from from our agency, from our community, and most importantly, from Arthur".

The Donna Seland Ambassador Award

"In recognition of going above and beyond, of dedication and commitment, in softly leading with tremendous heart, courage and compassion, and in demonstrating in so many ways the difference we can make in the lives of others."

In memory of Donna Seland (January 2013), long time Board Member, friend and mentor of Calgary Seniors, The Donna Seland Ambassador Award was created to acknowledge the importance of volunteering and giving back to the community and others. This award is presented each year at the Annual General Meeting.

Agency Highlights



Our second annual One for the Ages Gala, featuring Canadian actor/singer Tom Jackson and the Travelling Mabels was held June 3rd, 2016. This year we welcomed renowned philanthropist, octogenarian and good friend Jim Gray as Honorary Chair with Jimmy Hughes returning as emcee. Guests included local celebrities such as Calgary Flames alumni Jamie Macoun and country music artist Beverley Mahood. Thanks to our generous sponsors, donors and guests, we netted over \$32,000 that helped support our programs and services in 2016.

Calgary Seniors continued to build important connections in the community:

- **The Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP)** - Calgary Chapter and Calgary Seniors solidified a partnership that will help build awareness of the challenges many seniors in Calgary are facing.

- **AgeCare** and Calgary Seniors began working together to raise awareness of housing, living options and needs for seniors as they age.

- **Calgary Co-op**, in a new 3 year partnership with Calgary Seniors, recognizes the mobility challenges that many seniors face day-to-day. By sponsoring our Assisted Shopping program they are supporting seniors in getting out to acquire basic needs like food, grooming accessories and household items.

- **Calgary PRIME Times (Calgary Senior News)** has become an important media partner with Calgary Seniors in informing individuals on issues, programs and services available to older Calgarians.

Board Members:

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Volunteer Services

Volunteer Respite Project

In July of 2016, Calgary Seniors, with generous support from the provincial Community Initiatives Program (CIP), launched the pilot “Companion Care Volunteer Respite” project. Through this project, volunteers are recruited, screened, and trained to go into the homes of program participants on a regular basis to provide relief to caregivers. The caregiver is then able to attend to their own needs without worrying about the safety of their loved one, which is a key element in relieving stress and preventing caregiver burnout. Volunteers are responsible for providing basic care and companionship, without giving any direct medical assistance (such as toileting or transferring).

This project also includes the delivery of several facilitated sessions for caregivers and the community, which provide information, support and resources around topics such as: grief & guilt, navigating the system, elder abuse, family dynamics, and changing relationships. The pilot is scheduled to wrap up in February 2018, with nine+ caregiver/care recipient pairs registered for the service in 2016.

Volunteer Impact

In 2016, through Calgary Seniors Volunteer Services programs more than 1,200 volunteers provided over 86,000 hours of service (a 38% increase from 2015). If these volunteers were paid a wage of \$20 per hour, the total value of their contribution would be a staggering \$1,720,000.

Companionship and Social Support Programs

162 new clients were registered for Assisted Shopping, Friendly Visiting, and Telephone Reassurance in 2016. 291 new matches were made over the course of the year. These programs experienced a 25% growth from 2015.

A senior named Minnie was matched in 2016. She was estranged from her family and feeling very lonely when she was registered for the Friendly Visiting program. Minnie was matched with two lovely volunteers, and they quickly became like family to her. These volunteers have supported Minnie in improving her relationship with her children. Minnie says she adores her ladies, and calls the Calgary Seniors office frequently to say thank you and express her appreciation.



Escorted Transportation

72 regular volunteer drivers (a 30% increase from 2015) provided rides for hundreds of Escorted Transportation senior clients in 2016. These volunteers reported 4,907 hours of service with 3,624 trips completed over the course of the year.

Volunteer drivers provide much more than just a ride for the seniors. Jackie Mork, a long-time Escorted Transportation program volunteer visited one senior with whom she had developed a special friendship at least once per week during her time in hospice (she passed away in 2016). No other family members visited during this time. Jackie's compassion and generosity provided great comfort for this senior at the end of her life.

“I want to give a shout-out to one of your drivers. He drove me to my appointment on Monday to see my neurologist for my migraines. After my appointment I was so sick, Colin wheeled me in a wheelchair and took extra good care of me as I was sick in his car, making sure I got inside my apartment safely. He really is outstanding”

~ An Escorted Transportation Client

Volunteer Services

CaregiverConnect

Calgary Seniors launched the CaregiverConnectYYC website in December 2016. Since the launch there have been over 850 visits from unique individuals.

The goal of CaregiverConnect is to provide information, support and resources to all family caregivers, regardless of their employment status or for whom they are caring. The website is designed to serve as an information hub, providing caregivers information that is accessible and relevant to them based on where they are within their caregiving journey. Information and resources for employers are available as well, with the hope that they will access the information to provide support for their working caregivers.

In addition to the website, CaregiverConnect also provides in-person information sessions for organizations, either for working caregivers or for those supervising or managing working caregivers. Since October 2016, more than eight CaregiverConnect Presentations have been delivered, with over 150 people participating.

Salman Tajammul is an outstanding volunteer! He has been working with Calgary Seniors for more than a year and is matched with a senior named Doreen, who is disabled and extremely lonely. Salman supports Doreen through the Assisted Shopping program, and they have been matched together since January 2016. Salman is not just a volunteer for Doreen, but is her only connection to the outside world. They regularly go for a coffee before their scheduled shopping trip, and frequently spend almost an hour and a half just catching up. Doreen calls Salman her very close friend, and she has repeatedly expressed her gratitude to Calgary Seniors for matching them up.

The friendship between Doreen and Salman is a beautiful reminder to all of us that **when it comes to kindness, religion or culture, age or even gender don't matter at all.** Salman is not only a great support to Doreen, but for many other seniors as well. Whenever we send out requests for one-time shopping assistance or temporary support for seniors, Salman always steps forward and goes out of his way to help our clients. Recently, he drove one of our seniors for four consecutive days to the hospital to visit her husband. **We are so grateful for Salman, and all our wonderful volunteers!**

Reducing Social Isolation by Mobilizing Volunteers

The goal of Calgary Seniors' Volunteer Services department is to *"facilitate meaningful relationships between volunteers and vulnerable seniors, resulting in mutually beneficial changes to quality of life and social inclusion."*

The extensive body of literature on seniors' social isolation focuses on preventing social isolation to avoid the serious physical health, mental health, and quality of life problems socially isolated seniors often experience.

It is understood that social isolation can have physically and emotionally damaging effects resulting in depression, poor nutrition, decreased immunity, anxiety, fatigue, and social stigma. Independently or collectively, these conditions are likely to impact on survival.

At Calgary Seniors, our volunteer programming is simple and effective, and helps end isolation one senior at a time. The return on investment is overwhelming. Seniors are happier and their risk of the above issues is significantly reduced.

"I was debating between medicine or taking care of the animals, and I had decided the animals. An angel called me and asked if I would like to get help through the senior service and have the cats looked at. They are very good with words and make it so you can keep your dignity, and so I said please, yes,"

~ A Pet Assist Client

SeniorConnect

Education

Each year, thousands of Calgarians commit to educating themselves about vulnerable seniors in our city. In 2016, with the long-term support of United Way of Calgary, we almost doubled our reach to local individuals by both bringing awareness about vulnerable seniors and by educating people on where to get help.

Impact

As a result of our community education, SeniorConnect responded and provided urgent social work support to over 200 seniors in their homes who were identified as being at-risk or who were experiencing a crisis. In addition, hundreds more were helped to access appropriate services before a crisis happened, as a direct result of raising awareness in our city. Because of SeniorConnect and our partnership with The Distress Centre, older adults in our city are able to access needed support and assistance before a life changing crisis occurs. The SeniorConnect program saw an increase of over 25 per cent of referrals from 2015.

Did You Know...?

By 2030, the year in which the youngest baby boomers reach age 65, Canada expects to see close to one in four persons aged 65 years and over. By 2063, the number of Canadians aged 80 years and over would reach nearly 5 million (Statistics Canada, 2014).

Harold is 78 years old. He was a mechanic for 42 years. If you get him talking about cars and engines, you will be there all day. Like many of us, Harold has never had a lot of money. He was married, but he and his wife divorced many years ago. They had one son together, but he lives two provinces away and Harold rarely sees or speaks with him. Harold was sharing a house with three other people in order to make accommodations more affordable. One of his roommates was very manipulative and started taking what little money Harold had. Harold began struggling to find enough money for food and public transit. He stopped visiting his doctor because he couldn't pay for either transportation or medication costs.

As the months went by, Harold fell into a depressive state and began suffering from panic attacks. He began to withdraw from everyone and spent almost all his time alone in his room with the door closed. Harold continued to live this way until a concerned citizen made a call alerting the Distress Centre to Harold's situation and prompting a SeniorConnect response. Unsure at first, Harold came to trust the SeniorConnect worker and they worked together on a plan that secured his own apartment and finances.

No senior should fall through the cracks
"I'm in a better place now – I sleep better. I just wasn't in a good place before. I didn't want to see anyone". ~Harold



Our stats show....

The majority of seniors identified as being 'at-risk' and referred to the SeniorConnect program are usually over the age of 75, live alone, have limited or no social supports, have some form of mental and physical decline, and are of low income. Many seniors who need to work past retirement age have suffered loss of employment in 2016 bringing about cases of poverty and depression as utility cut-offs, evictions, and foreclosures were on the increase.

Improvement

As we know, a crisis can happen at any time so responding in a timely manner to provide early intervention to the growing population of seniors in Calgary becomes even more important. In late 2016, Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) committed additional dollars for us to develop a much needed 'after-hours' response service. This expansion allows us to reach even more vulnerable seniors by responding to situations of higher need or crisis outside of business hours and, most importantly, at the right time, and in the right place!

AS PEOPLE AGE, they are more likely to encounter a number of life changes and losses, like the loss of family, friends, mobility, employment and independence. Loss of a driver's license is significant too!

Outreach

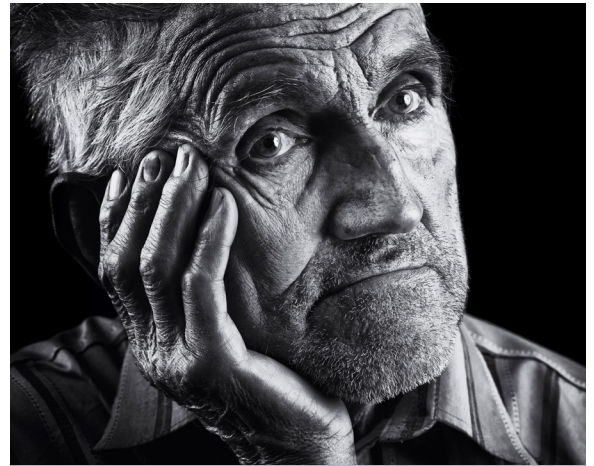
Our Team worked with over 260 long-term clients and their families, as well as many others, in 2016. We provided help in applying for pensions and other benefits; accessing transportation, health, and housing; connecting to social programs; and advocating in the best interests of older adults in our community areas of the North East and the northern section of the South East quadrant. Our workers go into the homes of older adults as well as position themselves in different community and senior centre locations to ensure easy access and reduced barriers to service. We also introduced monthly 'forms clinics' for those requiring one-off help in applying for government pensions and subsidies, and this has been well received.

Aging

The first wave of baby boomers moved into their senior years in 2011. As our population continues to age, we will see certain opportunities and challenges that will accompany this demographic shift, moving aging-related issues to the top of the policy agenda locally, nationally and globally. Locally, the 'Seniors Age-Friendly Strategy' (City of Calgary) was approved by Council in June 2015 and work began to make Calgary a better place to live for all older adults. Since then, our agency has been a proud and active member of several working groups and committees, and will remain so as this initiative pushes forward in the years ahead.

Our stats showed...

a significant increase in adults aged 60 - 64 seeking help as the downturn in the economy saw many lose employment and left looking for financial, practical, and emotional support. Assistance was provided in applying for early Canada Pensions, Income Support programs and disability benefits as those who were laid off were also left without health benefits. In addition, we have been hugely successful in supporting those from different cultural backgrounds access much needed community supports and services as challenges around income, housing, language, and sponsorship remain on the forefront and will likely continue to be on the rise.



Thomas is 77 years old. He has glaucoma and has lost most of his vision as a result. Because of this, Thomas was having difficulty managing on his own; he could no longer drive to medical appointments, the grocery store, or to visit his friends for coffee like he used to. He found it difficult to cook for himself and had increasing problems, as his wife of 58 years passed away three years ago.

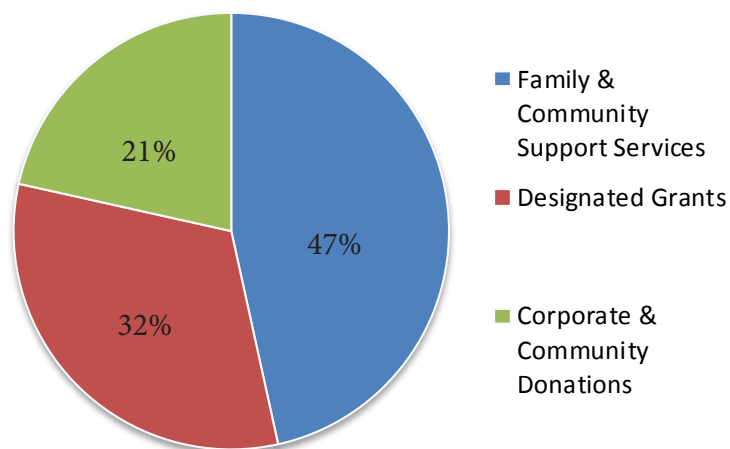
Thomas has two sons who live out of province and are unable to help him. Lately, Thomas was feeling lonely because he is unable to leave the house as freely as he used to and he receives no visitors. He is still grieving the loss of his wife. He feels sad and alone. Thomas's situation is not uncommon, in fact, it is all too common.

Our outreach workers help to knit together the fabric of our society by connecting seniors, like Thomas, to practical and meaningful long-term supports and relationships.

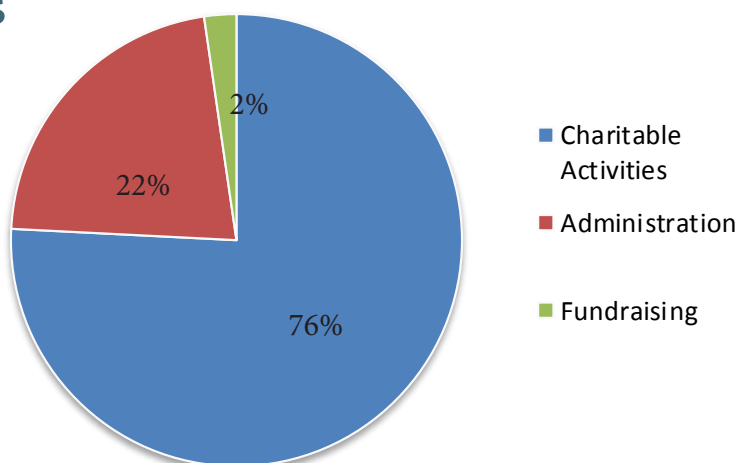
**Calgary Seniors Outreach is a member of The Way In Network*

Revenue & Expenses

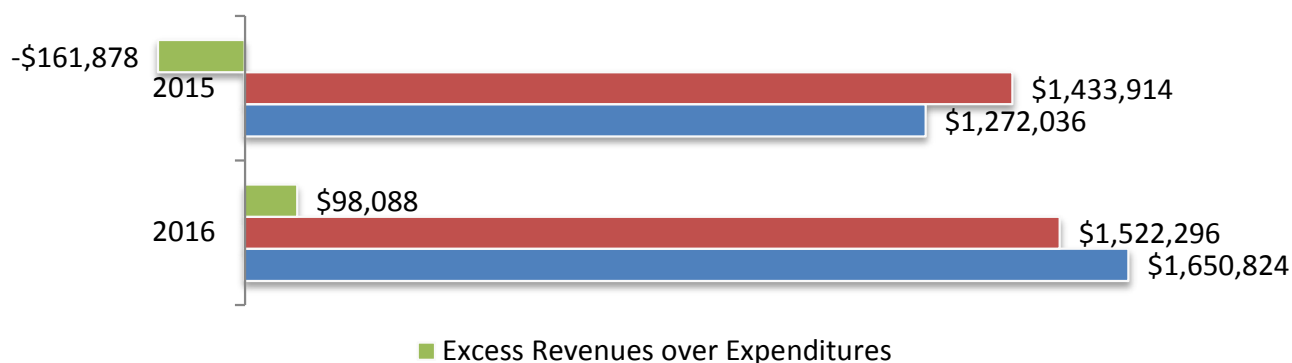
Revenues



Expenditures



Statement of Operations



Calgary Seniors' Audited Financial Statements are available by request.
To obtain a copy, please call (403) 266-6200

Donor Thank You!

Without the support of all our donors - big and small - we could not do what we do each and every day in ensuring vulnerable seniors do not fall through the cracks. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

A special thank you to: **FCSS** for increasing our core funding and additional investment; **The City of Calgary** for emergency funding through their Emergency Resiliency Fund; **The United Way** for committing to longer term funding of community education; **The Calgary Foundation** for promoting our agency to their family funds and other foundation donors; **The Calgary Co-operative Association Ltd** for supporting our Assisted Shopping Program; **The JC Anderson Legacy Fund** and **Kayak Foundation at The Calgary Foundation** for their generous support in 2016; **Rideout Investment Corporation** for office expansion and unwavering support; and **The Anonymous Family Legacy Fund** for their annual gift in perpetuity which has had a significant impact in us weathering the economic uncertainty in recent years.

Thank you to those who have continued to support us over the years; those who make a commitment every month in our monthly giving; those who provide gifts-in-kind; our Facebook followers who respond to our urgent needs: **Our sincerest gratitude for your caring, commitment and generosity which allows us to help those most in need - when they need it.**

We recognize those who donated over \$500 in 2016

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Calgary Seniors'

RESOURCE SOCIETY

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