

Winter 2021

# VitalNews

**FUND HIGHLIGHT**  
Auto-Star**DONOR STORY**  
Canadian Natural Resources Ltd.**FALL SMART AND CARING  
COMMUNITY GRANTS****VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT**  
Vital Signs Committee**VITAL SIGNS****UPDATES & YEAR-END**

## Message from the Board Chair

As I write this there is still no snow on the ground, but there's definitely a nip in the air. Fall is one of my favorite seasons and this year has been one of the best! But all good things must come to an end. 2021 is also coming to an end and I must admit that I'm glad to see the back side of it!

Before it ends though, we will have Christmas and all that the season brings. When I was young, I loved the lights, the smells, and of course the presents that meant Christmas. Now, I find that it's the giving that matters to me. Watching my son open up his present and seeing his eyes light up as he tries on his new coat and tells me that it's perfect. (As a child, I wondered what kind of person gave clothes for presents!) Seeing my son's fiancé wearing the earrings that I gave her last Christmas. It is the giving that warms my heart and is the reason for my season.

Here at the Community Foundation of Southeast Alberta this is also a time for us to take stock. Our fall granting cycle is over and the cheques are in the mail. Organizations can now start those new projects, or continue working on others. We are turning to the new year and what it will bring.

2022 marks 30 years for the Community Foundation and we are really hoping to have some in-person celebrations to mark this momentous achievement. Without your support and the hard work of our employees and volunteers we would not be here today. I hope that you realize the difference that you make today, tomorrow, and forever. Walk a little taller because you are a big deal to us!

Sincerely,

Frances Barnes

## DONOR HIGHLIGHT: CANADIAN NATURAL RESOURCES LIMITED



***“This contribution will have a substantial impact on youth in our community and the charities they support.***

***Thanks to the donation from Canadian Natural, more youth groups will have the opportunity to participate in YiP for years to come.”***

– Niki Gray, Acting Executive Director

Canadian Natural’s, Tracey Thompson, Curtis Scherger, Jim Aleman, and Jeff Smyth, and CFSEA’s Niki Gray

**Canadian Natural Resources Limited** generously gifted **\$15,000** to the Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta’s **Youth Endowment Fund**. The original donation to this fund is never spent, rather, the investment revenue earned each year will be distributed through the Youth in Philanthropy Program helping engage students in community development and philanthropy.

***“Canadian Natural is proud to support the Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta’s Youth in Philanthropy Endowment Fund. This initiative is an important opportunity for youth in the community to learn about local challenges and to make a positive impact by helping those directly in need.”***

– Curtis Scherger, Canadian Natural, Operations Superintendent (Medicine Hat area)

Canadian Natural believes in investing in the communities where they live and work. Their contribution will help support CFSEA’s **Youth in Philanthropy (YiP) Program**. YiP provides motivated students with hands-on experience working as a team and learning about local charitable organizations. Students develop teamwork, leadership, research, and communication skills while learning about critical issues in their community. In 2021, a record number of school groups participated, helping distribute \$19,800 to 15 charities.



## FUND HIGHLIGHT: AUTO STAR

*We particularly value CFSEA's dedication to identifying the greatest needs in our community through the collaborative Vital Signs process. CFSEA is a group we trust to quickly distribute our donation to where it is most needed in our local community. As the original capital investment is never used and lives on in perpetuity, it will be a great legacy for Auto-Star and the fabulous employees who make our company great.*

**- Robert Symmonds, Auto-Star**



**Auto-Star** started in Medicine Hat over 35 years ago, creating innovative technology. Since then, Auto-Star has evolved into what it is today, providing the best retail POS technology to the grocery, pharmacy, and natural health markets across North America.

They value their Medicine Hat roots and prioritize not only supporting local businesses and community organizations, but also the people behind the groups. Many of their past and present employees are passionate about making Medicine Hat a healthy, caring place to live. Volunteerism and the spirit of charity is part of their company culture. Auto-Star has sponsored and participated in several Community Foundation events and other charitable events over the years.

In October 2021, the **Auto-Star Fund** with CFSEA was established as a **Smart and Caring Community Fund**. This allows CFSEA to respond to the ever-changing needs of the region now and for generations. Investment income from the Auto-Star Fund is distributed through a granting process. CFSEA is thrilled to partner with Auto-Star in contributing to a vibrant community.

*The Community Foundation has a wonderful history in Medicine Hat. We really respect their commitment to integrity and leadership, and dedication to inclusion and diversity in our community. As a company, Auto-Star values the well-being of our employees, the importance of contributing to our community, and the long-lasting relationships we build with our customers. Supporting CFSEA is a natural fit as our organizations' values align.*

**- Robert Symmonds, Auto-Star**





## 2021 FALL SMART AND CARING COMMUNITY GRANTS

**Smart and Caring Community Grants support communities across Southeastern Alberta.**

Donors can choose this fund as a way to allocate their contributions to support the community's greatest needs. A comprehensive procedure to determine the most crucial community needs are gathered through annual Vital Events. Grants are then awarded based on potential impact and fund availability. These grants are awarded twice a year, in the spring and fall.

Congratulations to the **14** organizations who received a total of **\$113,907.50!**

***"Our recent Vital Focus highlighted the current grant priorities and the importance of working together to create change. The fall grant recipients demonstrate just that - representing collaborations and fostering connections between diverse groups across the region. Each one of these initiatives shows promising impact for their communities."***

**– Niki Gray, Acting Executive Director**

**\$3,000**  
Connecting SE AB Youth to  
Skilled Work



**\$15,000**  
Health Equipment Loan  
Program



**Canadian  
Red Cross**



**\$4,000**  
Kindness Boxes



**\$10,000**  
Ribbons, Fabric, and  
Connection to Culture

**\$2,000**  
Washer Dryer



**\$10,000**  
Inflatable Batting Cage

**Brooks Bombers  
Baseball  
Association**



**\$7,047.50**  
Children's Festival Project



**\$10,755**  
Code Red

**\$12,000**  
Computer Equipment



**\$10,800**  
GoGirls & GameOn Program  
Expansion



**Empress  
Friendship Centre**

**\$12,000**  
Outreach & Support



**MEDICINE HAT  
COLLEGE**

**\$10,000**  
Mental Health Series -  
The Beej Project

**\$2,400**  
Playground

**Brooks &  
District  
Women's Safe  
Shelter**



**Kerby Centre**  
for the 55 plus

**\$4,625**  
Medicine Hat Tax Clinic for Low  
Income Seniors

*The Spring Smart & Caring Community Grant Cycle will open in early February 2022. Connect with the CFSEA office to learn more!*

## RURAL COMMUNITY FUNDS

### PRAIRIE CROCUS COMMUNITY FUND

**Empress Friendship Centre** received **\$12,000** for their Support and Outreach program .

“Thanks to the generous grant from Community Foundation and Prairie Crocus Fund, the Empress Friendship Centre is able to install a generator for emergency use which will benefit the whole community as well as purchase some technology to help with administrative and programming functions.”

- Diane Jarvis, Empress Friendship Centre



*Empress Friendship Centre Staff & Volunteers*

### RURAL COMMUNITY FUND OF FORTY MILE

**The Friends of Bow Island Library Society** received **\$7,047.50** to support the Children's Festival Project with the purchase of their own equipment and games.

“This funding from the Smart & Caring Grant gives us greater confidence that we'll be able to hold the Bow Island Children's Festival for 2022 and years to come. The pandemic has taken so much away from our children and our festival will bring back some positivity, excitement, and community engagement for them to look forward to. Thank you to the Community Foundation and our own Rural Community Fund of Forty Mile for recognizing the importance of our event and providing significant support to our Society.”

- Kim Mitchell, Friends of Bow Island Library Society



*Clint Thacker, Kim Mitchell, & Kelly Thacker*

### BROOKS & DISTRICT COMMUNITY FUND

**Cleo's Karma Canine Rescue** received \$2,000 to purchase a washer and dryer for their animal shelter.

“Cleo's Karma Canine Rescue is grateful to receive this funding. Purchasing a washer and dryer will help us keep our animals healthy and happy. We go through a lot of bedding and won't have to haul laundry to various locations anymore! A big thank you goes out to the Community Foundation for selecting our charity to receive this grant”

- Krista LaFrenière, Cleo's Karma Canine Rescue



*Leona Ferguson, Inge Ellefson, & Krista LaFrenière*

## CYPRESS COUNTY COMMUNITY FUND

### **The Community Foundation is thrilled to announce the establishment of the fourth Rural Community Fund.**

The Cypress County council has made the initial contribution of \$10,000 to establish the **Cypress County Community Fund**, with the CFSEA Board matching an additional \$10,000. The community fund will operate using the Community Foundation's charitable status, administration, and financial supports.

***"Cypress County is excited to see this community fund get started, and we all look forward to the good it will bring to our region. We know there are lots of great projects and ideas in our county that just need an extra lift — this is a perfect resource to help make things happen."***

***– Cypress County council***

With the creation of the Cypress County Community Fund, CFSEA now has full representation for all of Southeastern Alberta. A local Advisory Committee will be formed consisting of Cypress County residents which will lead the direction of the fund while providing knowledge and expertise of their community's greatest needs within the County.

Organizations within the Cypress County will continue to apply for grants through the Community Foundation office. Their applications will be reviewed locally by the Advisory Committee who will then make their grant recommendations to the CFSEA Grants Committee.

Donors within Cypress County now have the opportunity to ***give where they live***, ensuring donations to the Cypress County Community Fund will benefit their community today, tomorrow, forever!



***"We are delighted to partner with the Cypress County in the establishment of a community fund to benefit their region. Our goal is to increase philanthropy in all our communities by growing local community funds, which will provide lasting support for community needs across Southeastern Alberta and provide additional opportunities to their local organizations."***

***– Niki Gray, Acting Executive Director***



## VITAL SIGNS

**Vital Events** are community checkups conducted by community foundations across Canada. These events provide a snapshot of community stories and data that spark conversation, engage donors, inform grant making, and provide opportunities for the community to go deeper and have a greater impact in supporting vibrant, healthy, and caring communities.

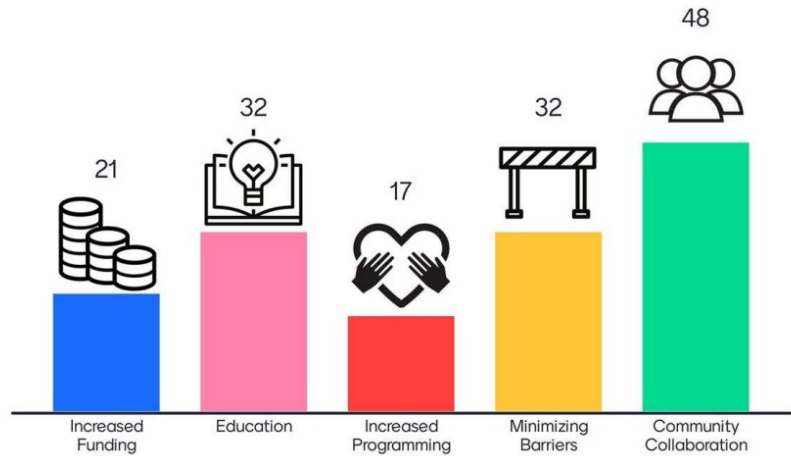
### [Find the 2021 Vital Focus Report Here](#)

This year, the Vital Focus Report was launched virtually through an interactive platform. Over 140 individuals attended this event listening to seven unique impact speaker presentations. Recorded versions of these speakers can be found on **CFSEA's YouTube Channel**.

During the event, the audience participated in a small survey. These results will help provide groundwork for the 2022 Vital Conversation.

## What are some ways to solve these issues?

iventimeter



Each year, our Community Leadership Committee selects two individuals serving front-line at a charity to receive a \$500 award for professional development. **Your 2021 Vital People are....**

## VitalPeople Award



Shelby Haga



Cody Weiss

## VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

### ***Thank you, Vital Signs Sub-Committee!***

*The Vital Signs Sub-Committee supported CFSEA in gathering, analyzing, and editing the 2021 Vital Focus Report.*

#### **Jason Openo**

"We love living in Medicine Hat. This is our home, and I volunteer for CFSEA because it takes care of the donations people give to make this a great place to live, work, and play. Working on Vital Signs provided insight into the challenges Medicine Hat is facing so that we can fund the right programs that can help our communities emerge from the pandemic. When I talk about sustainability, I think of our parents being able to age gracefully and our children having the environment and opportunities that will enable them to stay here. CFSEA plays a big role, and I'm glad to work with committed people who care about the people in this community."



#### **Danielle Semrau-McLean**

Danielle is the Stakeholder Relations Advisor at Methanex Corporation Medicine Hat. In this role, she is responsible for Methanex's community outreach activities. The Community Advisory Panel and Social Responsibility Investment Program provide her opportunities to connect and work with individuals and organizations in the community, which Danielle finds incredibly rewarding. This was the first year that Danielle contributed to the development of the Vital Focus report, a publication that she believes encourages important conversations in support of a healthier community.

She has a Bachelor of Communications with a major in journalism from Mount Royal University. Danielle was born and raised in Medicine Hat. She enjoys travelling with her husband Ian, reading, and spending time with friends and family.



#### **Glenda Hawthorne**

"I'm pleased to be part of CFSEA and the Vital Signs subcommittee. There are several reasons I have chosen to volunteer with this organization. I believe in the mission, vision, and values of the CFSEA. I first became familiar with the CFSEA when I was looking for a way to honour my late husband. CFSEA is the perfect fit as the money stays local and I was able to develop an endowment fund in his name which is an ongoing legacy.

Then, as I was looking for volunteer opportunities I soon realized that the CFSEA is an organization that I want to support with my time. I want to be apart of an organization that is worthwhile, valuable, and has an impact on the community. Working with a group of amazing dedicated individual is an honour, a privilege, and is inspiring."





### Farewell to Michelle!

“Right from Day 1, Michelle has been the heart and soul of our **Rural Community Fund of Forty Mile**. She brought an incredible amount of skill, talent, and experience to her position as Fund Coordinator, but perhaps what is most impressive is her passion and dedication to her community. That was evident in her relentless and determined efforts to make sure our Rural Fund was supporting local groups and individuals as much as possible. She was everywhere and talking to everyone!

Michelle will be impossible to replace as our Fund Coordinator, but the Rural Community Fund of Forty Mile will be a lasting legacy in our communities for many years to come! From all of us in the County of Forty Mile, now and in the future, thank you Michelle!”

- Clint Thacker, Forty Mile Committee Chair

To connect with the Rural Community of Forty Mile, please call **403.866.8901** or email **admin@cfsea.ca**



“We are so grateful to have had Michelle as part of our CFSEA team over the years. Her enthusiastic energy and passion for both her community and the Rural Community Fund of Forty Mile will be incredibly missed.”

- Niki Gray, Acting Executive Director



### Welcome to Brenda!

CFSEA Board of Directors is excited to welcome Brenda Mercer to the team!

***“I work for Miywasin Friendship Centre as the Cultural Coordinator and love my job! I am happily married with two daughters and seven grandchildren. The main reason I wanted to be part of the Community Foundation is that I believe it makes a huge change in the lives of many in Medicine Hat in a positive direction.”***

**- Brenda Mercer**

# Holiday Hours

December 24:	8:30am - 12:00pm
December 27 - 30:	8:30am - 4:30pm
December 31:	8:30am - 12:00pm
January 3:	CLOSED

## WHEN GIVING MATTERS MOST...

Consider the Community Foundation  
for your annual gift.



COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION  
*of Southeastern Alberta*

403.527.9038  
**cfsea.ca**

