

CommunityNews

Issue: **Summer 2025**



A Message from our Board Chair

Kyle Pudwell, Board Chair

“As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with gratitude for the dedication and generosity of our supporters, partners, and community members. Your commitment has fueled remarkable achievements, including **awarding over \$1,170,000 this spring**. Together, we are making a lasting difference across Southeastern Alberta.

This season, we warmly welcome our new board members, Bryon Johnson, Robert Symmonds, and Inge Ellefson. We also wish to thank our retiring members, Jennifer Mah, Josh Hudson, and David Andrews, for their years of service and leadership. Your contributions have shaped CFSEA's impact and vision for the future.

We also celebrate Barb's retirement and honour her eight years of passion, hard work, and care for the Community Foundation. On behalf of the entire board, I extend our deepest appreciation and best wishes as she begins this new chapter.

Looking ahead, I am excited to continue working alongside all of you as we strengthen our grantmaking, foster connections, and build on this strong foundation. Thank you for being an essential part of our shared mission.”

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Important Dates

- August 6 (at noon):** Grant Writing Workshop
- August 6:** Fall 2025 Community Grants Application Opens
- September 1:** Letter of Intent (LOI) Deadline
- September 15:** Fall 2025 Community Grants Application Deadline
- September 27:** Board Leadership Seminar
- October 6:** Heritage Club Reception

New Fund

- WestMET Community Fund

Community Impact Award

McMan Awarded \$35,000

For young people in Medicine Hat, finding the right support can be challenging. Different services are scattered across the city, and long wait times can mean help arrives too late. McMan Youth, Family & Community Services is working to change that—and thanks to CFSEA's 2025 Community Impact Award, they're one step closer.

In January, **McMan received a \$35,000 grant** to help fund **Kickstand**, an innovative one-stop youth centre opening this fall. Located on Kingsway Avenue, Kickstand will bring together mental health care, addiction support, primary care, peer mentorship, and social services, all under one roof. It will be the first centre of its kind in Medicine Hat and one of only eleven across Alberta.



At the heart of Kickstand is a simple but powerful idea: young people shouldn't have to navigate a maze of appointments or retell their story over and over. Instead, they'll walk into a safe, welcoming place and find the support they need, when they need it.

The Community Impact Award will help renovate the centre's kitchen and purchase supplies to get it up and running. Cooking classes, cultural meals, and communal dining will build skills and confidence, promote well-being, and create a sense of connection.

Kickstand is expected to serve as many as **1,200 youth every year**, with flexible hours, walk-in appointments, and a youth-led approach. A local BOOST Youth Advisory group of 19 young people has been involved in planning every step. Their insights are shaping services that reflect what they need and hope for in the future.

“

“Our goal for the kitchen is to provide more than just food—it will nourish connection and learning in a welcoming space where youth gather, grow, and feel cared for.”

— **Shannon Nelson, Director of Services, McMan South**

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About the Award

At CFSEA, the Community Impact Award is presented annually at the beginning of the year to recognize a project or initiative that demonstrates strong community collaboration, addresses an identified need, and has the potential to create long-term, meaningful impact.

Applications open each January and are reviewed by a volunteer committee based on several factors, including alignment with CFSEA's strategic priorities, potential for lasting community benefit, clarity of purpose, and how the initiative involves and reflects the people it aims to serve.

McMan's Kickstand Centre stood out for its innovative, youth-centred model, commitment to prevention and early intervention, and its strong foundation of community and youth engagement. It exemplifies what the Community Impact Award is all about—**investing in solutions that build a healthier, more connected Southeastern Alberta.**

Community Grants — Spring 2025

A Record Season of Giving!

This spring, CFSEA awarded a record-breaking total of \$261,187 in community grants—our most ever!

These grants support vital programs and services across Southeastern Alberta, made possible through the generosity of our donors and the hard work of local organizations.

How Grants Are Awarded

Community grants are awarded through an application process. Local charitable and non-profit organizations apply for funding that aligns with the Community Foundation's annual evidence-based research and **Vital Signs** initiatives. In 2025, these include **social isolation, housing availability and affordability, economic development and health access** (learn more from our Rural Futures report on page 9). Area-specific grant committees review applications, made up of local volunteers who understand their community's unique challenges and opportunities. Learn more at cfsea.ca/community-grants.

Congratulations to the **36** organizations!

Medicine Hat & Redcliff



Medicine Hat Alberta Games Society
*Medicine Hat Special Olympics 2025:
Opening Ceremonies*
\$10,000



Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society
Emergency Shelter Oven
\$9,400



Unison at Veiner Centre
Meals on Wheels Program
\$12,000



Big Brothers Big Sisters Association of Medicine Hat and District
Micro Mentoring Pilot Project
\$7,000



Monarch 1911 Society
The Restoration and Revitalization of the Historic Monarch Theatre
\$5,000



What Matters to Hatters Coalition
Kindness for All Campaign
\$2,805



Medicine Hat Family Service
Community Intake Project: Pilot Project
\$15,000



Miywasin Society of Aboriginal Services
*Miywasin Friendship Centre:
Food Sovereignty Project*
\$15,000



Rehabilitation and Employment for Developing Independence (REDI)
Enterprises Society
REDI MakerSpace Project
\$10,000



Neighbourhood Association of Medicine Hat
Oasis Project
\$25,000



Shortgrass Library System
Indoor Air Quality Awareness Program
\$1,560



Medicine Hat Pregnancy Support Society
Safe Space Upgrade
\$4,720



Covenant Foundation
Visitor Seating at St. Joseph's Home
\$5,000



Saamis Immigration Services Association
Newcomers Language and Life Skills Program
\$21,600



Alzheimer Society of Alberta and NWT
Workspace/Volunteer Equipment
\$5,500

Total: \$149,585

Grant Recipients — Spring 2025

Brooks & District



Duchess and District Library Board
Library Renovation
\$3,850



Global Village Centre
Tell Me Your Story Project
\$3,000



Bassano Elks Lodge
Street Side Revitalization
\$4,852



Newell Adult Education Centre
Literacy Building Blocks
\$3,000



Rosemary Community Agricultural Society
Brooks Farmers' Market FOOD
Vouchers Program
\$15,000



Society of Brooks Community Adult Learning Council
LOFT Board Replacement
\$5,000



Rolling Hills Agricultural Society
Arena Ice Plant Replacement
\$5,000

Total: \$39,702

Prairie Crocus (Special Areas No. 2, 3, 4 & the M.D. of Acadia)



Youngstown School, Prairie Land School Division
Nutrition Program
\$4,750



Royal Canadian Legion Acadia Branch 208
Oyen Legion Upgrades
\$8,000



Hanna Municipal Library Board
Program and Conference Room
Technology Upgrades
\$3,000



New Brigid Community Association
New Brigid Community Hall
Stage Curtains
\$5,000



Lynks Harvest Sky Services and Supports Society
More Than a Meal Project
\$8,500



Acadia Valley Early Childhood Services
Enhancing & Expanding Early
Childhood Education Program
\$5,000



Village of Veteran
Community Hall Lightning Upgrade
\$5,000

Total: \$39,250

County of Forty Mile



Foremost & District Minor Hockey Association
Kitchen Renovation
\$7,500



Foremost Family & Community Centre
Furnace Replacement
\$8,000



North 40 Mile Recreation Society
Water Bottle Filling Stations for
Community Arena
\$3,150



Manyberries Community Association
Gather and Grow Project
\$2,500

Total: \$21,150

Grant Recipients — Spring 2025

Cypress County



Dunmore Community Association

Cross-Generational
Learning Workshops

\$4,000



Dunmore Equestrian Society

The Heritage Gather 2025

\$2,500



Prairie Gleaners Society

Air Exchange Unit

\$5,000

Total: \$11,500



Questions about grants? Connect with Emily today at grants@cfsea.ca or by visiting cfsea.ca/community-grants/.



Lanfine Wind Community Grant

Pattern Energy and CFSEA Grant Support Local Projects and Students

This spring, **\$22,000** was distributed through the Lanfine Wind Community Grant, a fund created by Pattern Energy in partnership with the Community Foundation to support communities in Special Area No. 3 and surrounding rural regions

Six local groups received funding for education, recreation, and community services. Two \$1,000 scholarships, the Lanfine Wind Scholarship Fund and the Badlands Baseball Academy Scholarship, were also awarded to students from Prairie Rose School Division.

“Whether it’s youth programs, community services, or infrastructure, this fund is here to respond to the community’s needs,” said Clint Olsen, Facility Manager of Lanfine Wind in Special Area No. 3.

Learn more at cfsea.ca/lanfinewind-communitygrant.



Pattern Energy presents grants to the Royal Canadian Legion Acadia Branch (above) and New Bridgen Community Association (below)

Project Highlight

Wellspring Alberta: Cancer Connect

Finding connection during a cancer journey can be one of the hardest challenges. Some are occupied by people in treatment. Others by those in recovery, or by caregivers simply trying to make it through. There's no pressure to speak—but when someone does, the others listen. And that's the point.

Cancer Connect, created by **Wellspring Alberta**, offers local people affected by cancer a welcoming, supportive place to gather. Launched in Medicine Hat in 2024, this free, in-person program provides a non-clinical environment where individuals and caregivers can share their experiences, gain coping strategies, and find comfort among peers who truly understand.

It's just one of over **70 evidence-informed programs** Wellspring offers across Alberta to ease pain, fatigue, distress, and isolation while also addressing the practical and financial impacts of a cancer diagnosis. Wellspring's approach is rooted in community participation. Local voices, volunteers, and healthcare partners have shaped the launch of Cancer Connect in Medicine Hat to reflect the needs of the people it serves. Meeting twice a month at the Kiwanis Club, the group is open to anyone affected by cancer, no referral required.



“Cancer Connect has become a lifeline for many in our community—a place where hope is renewed, loneliness fades, feelings and emotions are valid, and healing begins. I am honoured and grateful to sit in a roomful of warriors.”

— **Anabell Marroquin, Program Leader**

Until recently, the only cancer support options in the region were virtual or clinical offerings, which many found too formal or inaccessible. This group helps close that gap with an in-person, community-based space that promotes belonging, empathy, and well-being.

Time and again, participants share how grateful they are to have found this group—a place where they don't have to explain themselves,” says Anabell Marroquin, Program Leader. “They are understood as they share, or if they don't, in their gentle silence. That is the true gift of Cancer Connect, and why continued support is so essential.”

To learn more or sign up, visit bit.ly/medicine-hat-cancer-connect or call 1-866-682-3135.



Program Impact

- **94%** of participants felt less isolated during their cancer journey
- **93%** reported improved mental health and well-being
- **99%** would recommend Wellspring's support to a friend



How Did CFSEA Help?

In spring 2024, CFSEA awarded a **\$15,000 Community Grant** to support the launch of Cancer Connect in Medicine Hat. This funding contributed to initial startup costs and local program development. The program is also supported by the Alberta Cancer Foundation and the Medicine Hat Health Foundation.



Scholarship Highlight

Chief Gordon Earl Leadership Legacy Fund

The Chief Gordon Earl Leadership Legacy Fund was created in 2008 by his family, together with the Medicine Hat Police Service, to celebrate the life and legacy of Chief Earl, who passed away that same year.

Each year, this *designated fund* recognizes Grade 6 students in Medicine Hat schools who demonstrate these values in their daily lives. Since its inception, the fund has awarded more than **\$25,500 to young leaders** whose actions inspire their classmates and strengthen their communities.

In June 2025, **22 students were honoured** for showing compassion, standing up for others, and leading by example. For many, the scholarship is more than an award; it is a reminder that leadership starts with the small, everyday choices that make a difference.

“We are so grateful for the Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta and the Medicine Hat Police Service and their commitment to this fund in honour of our Dad. Gordon was a champion for youth and loved teaching them and watching them grow. We are so proud to see his legacy live on in this way.” — **The Earl Family**



Medicine Hat Police Service, the Community Foundation, and the Earl family, pictured at the Chief Gordon Earl Scholarship presentation on June 7, 2025.

About Chief Gordon Earl

Chief Earl served with the Medicine Hat Police Service for over 30 years, including one year as Chief of Police from 2007 until his passing in 2008. He was respected for his calm, principled leadership and his deep dedication to public service. His legacy lives on through the young leaders who carry forward the core values of the Medicine Hat Police Service: integrity, respect, courage, and accountability.



Youth in Philanthropy

Building tomorrow's philanthropists today.

Each year, students in school leadership classes or youth committees across the region are engaged in the world of philanthropy. The Youth in Philanthropy (YiP) program is a leadership development initiative where students learn about critical issues in their community, research local charities, and award grant funding of \$1,000 to \$2,000 to help address these issues. In 2025, 13 groups participated by contributing to the distribution of **\$21,300!**



St. Michael's School presents YiP cheque to the Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society



Shortgrass 4H Beef Club presents YiP cheque to the Etzikom Museum Windmill Centre



Youngstown School presents YiP Cheque to the Hanna Food Bank

New Fund Highlight

WestMET Community Fund

This spring, nine local organizations in Hanna, Youngstown, and Special Area No. 2 received funding through the first-ever **WestMET Community Grant**, created in partnership with the Community Foundation.

The WestMET Community Fund was established in early 2025 by WestMET Group Canada Ltd., with a vision to support regional projects and invest in the future of rural communities. Each year, part of the fund is distributed directly to community initiatives, while the rest is invested in an endowment to create sustainable funding for generations to come.

This first round of grants provided **\$35,760** in funding for projects that build vibrant communities, enhance health and wellness, protect local heritage, and create opportunities for learning and recreation within Special Area No. 2, Hanna, and Youngstown.



WestMET and CFSEA present grants to eight recipients in Special Area No. 2, Hanna, and Youngstown

Spring 2025 Grant Recipients

- ✦ Youngstown and District Community Centre
- ✦ Hanna Figure Skating Club
- ✦ Prairie Land Public School Division
- ✦ Lynks Harvest Sky Society
- ✦ Richdale Community Association
- ✦ Diamond Jubilee Recreation and Culture Centre
- ✦ Empress and District Fine Arts, Cultural Society
- ✦ J.C. Charyk Hanna School
- ✦ Hanna and District Historical Society

Questions about the WestMET Community Fund?

Connect with Helene at helene@cfsea.ca or call 403-866-8901.



Updates and Information

Rural Futures Report Now Available



We're proud to share ***Rural Futures: Regional Development and Conversations in Southeastern Alberta***, our latest report exploring the priorities, challenges, and opportunities identified by rural communities across the region.

Building on CFSEA's **Vital Signs** research and the **Vital Conversations** held over the past year, the report reflects what we heard directly from residents, community organizations, and local leaders. It highlights critical issues such as health care access, affordable housing shortages, workforce retention, and community well-being. The report offers actionable recommendations to guide collaboration and investment.



Explore the findings and download the report at cfsea.ca/news/cfseas-rural-futures-report-calls-for-action-in-southeastern-alberta.

CFSEA's Fall Grant Cycle: Opening Soon

Our **Fall 2025 Community Grant cycle** is just around the corner, and we're here to help your organization prepare!

On August 6 at noon, the Community Foundation is hosting a virtual Grant Writing Workshop to walk you through the updated application process, share tips for success, and answer any questions you may have. Whether you're a first-time applicant or a returning organization, this session is a great opportunity to strengthen your proposal.

To register, **RSVP by August 1** at bit.ly/GWWFall2025 or email admin@cfsea.ca.



Updates and Information

Heritage Club Reception



Save the Date HERITAGE CLUB RECEPTION

An evening to connect with community-minded individuals and hear about the impact our donors are having within Southeastern Alberta communities.

October
Monday 6 at 4:30 PM
2025



Learn more about the Heritage Club at <https://cfsea.ca/legacy-giving-wills/>

Join Us for the Heritage Club Reception

Whether you're a Heritage Club member or simply interested in learning more about legacy giving, we invite you to join us for an inspiring evening.

Connect with others who share your passion for shaping the future through philanthropy. Discover how a planned gift through your estate, insurance, retirement funds, or other assets can leave a lasting impact on your community.

Heritage Club Members have made a meaningful commitment to the future by including the Community Foundation in their plans.

Come celebrate, ask questions, and discover how you can contribute to building a better tomorrow.

Charitable Giving and Estate Planning

Leaving a gift to charity in your will is a powerful way to leave a lasting legacy and make a difference in the lives of others. It not only honours your values but can also help your estate reduce taxes, ensuring more of your generosity continues to create a positive impact for generations to come.

In this article written by business advisor, **Bruce Warkentin with MNP**, we learn about why legacy is more than what you leave behind. Bruce highlights rising land values, giving with intention, estate planning, and building flexibility to meet your values.

Click the link to read more: bit.ly/MNP-charitable-giving-estate-planning



How charitable giving strengthens your estate plan

As farmland values rise, landowners face tough choices. Here's how charitable giving can protect your farm, your heirs and the legacy you leave behind.

MNP / Apr 4



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Updates and Information

Volunteer Opportunity: Ronald McDonald House - Medicine Hat



Volunteers pictured at Medicine Hat's Ronald McDonald house, preparing meals for families in need

Together, we can make mealtime easier for families who need comfort and care.

After a long day at the hospital, a warm meal can mean the world. Through Ronald McDonald House Charities Alberta's *Home for Dinner* program, volunteer groups help make this possible by planning, cooking, and serving dinner to families staying at the House.

If your group is interested in making a meaningful impact at the Medicine Hat House, please have one member create an account and apply through the VolunteerHub portal: bit.ly/rmhcalberta-volunteer-for-home-for-dinner.

Society Spotlight: SEAWA

The Southeastern Alberta Watershed Alliance (SEAWA) is a non-profit, community-based organization working to protect, manage, and enhance the health of the South Saskatchewan River Sub-basin. SEAWA brings together residents, landowners, industry, and governments to promote sustainable water use, restore riparian areas, manage invasive species, and share knowledge about caring for local ecosystems across the region.

Learn more or get involved at seawa.ca.



SEAWA employees and volunteers pictured with their company sign