



2018
2019



Annual Report



Further Education Society
Strengthening Communities

"We build communities through literacy and learning."

Our mission

Strengthening communities, families, and individuals through literacy and learning by advocating, collaborating and removing barriers.

Our vision

Canada is a literate and learning society.

Acknowledgement of land

We are located on the traditional territories of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Siksika, the Piikani, the Kainai, the Tsuut'ina and the Stoney Nakoda First Nations, including Chiniki, Bearpaw, and Wesley First Nations. The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.



It takes a village

If there's one valuable lesson I've learned personally and professionally during my rewarding association with the Further Education Society of Alberta (FESA), it's that no one achieves their goals without rich collaboration and enduring partnerships. This has always felt like a guiding principle for FESA and a key to their continued success.

This past year was no exception. The Going the Distance project lived up to its name, garnering expert advice and support from Indigenous organizations across Canada, to politicians such as Senator Yvonne Boyer, and change agents including the Coady International Institute. We nurtured invaluable relationships with Indigenous and literacy leaders such as Ted Norris and Ningwakwe George, and celebrated powerful connections to business innovators like Dig Insights and employers such as Grey Eagle Resort and Casino.

Delivery of FESA's core services could not have happened without our remarkable trained facilitators and our many community workshops, not to mention the ongoing partnerships with Stoney Nakoda, Tsuut'ina Nation, and Discovery House. We're equally proud of our newer associations with Aspen, Village Square Health Centre and Southwest Community Resource Centre (SWCRC).

Plus, we enjoyed continued support from longtime funders including Family and Community Support Services (FCSS), Calgary Learns, and all three levels of government.

FESA was even able to affect international impact by sending children's books and manuals to a grateful orphanage in Uganda.

Whether it's the commitment from our Executive Director, the dedicated work of staff, or the good governance from our Board, the core of our success is through connections – ones that are mission critical and ensure we are building strong individuals, families and communities through literacy and learning.

It truly takes a village.



Donna Rapp
President,
Board of
Directors



**OUR
IMPACT**
2018 - 2019

24
partner
organizations
hosting FESA
programs in
Calgary

883
children reached
through literacy and
parenting programs

190
participants in Train the
Facilitator Workshops

103
adult literacy programs
delivered in Calgary

96%
of adult learners saw
improvement in their
literacy and essential skills

1027
adult learners engaged
in literacy and essential
skills programs

87%
of adult learners
demonstrated increased
confidence in their skills

A few highlights from our year

Calgary Programs

With 103 adult literacy programs delivered in Calgary this year, our Calgary Programs continue to be popular and highly requested. We've shifted our focus towards adult foundational learning with Financial Literacy and Reading & Writing Circles programs. These programs are popular with learners who can build their literacy and essential skills, while engaging in topics that are relevant to them in their daily lives.

We will be piloting our new Grandparents program with the Latin American Seniors Association in partnership with the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS), as well as the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) this upcoming year.

This program examines the role of grandparents in bringing up children, strategies to overcome the inevitable challenges that arise, and developing and maintaining strong relationships. We're excited to see how this program will develop and unfold!

We are also excited to offer more Workplace Learning Circle programs. This program develops foundational skills in a workplace setting for adults who are employed or hoping to be employed, and are struggling as a result of low-literacy.

ABC Life Literacy Award

On August 28th, 2018, ABC Life Literacy announced that the Further Education Society was the top winner of the Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life Literacy Innovation Award for FESA's New Beginnings: A Community Response to Parenting After Violence program. The Award recognizes organizations that develop and implement innovative adult literacy and essential skills programs in communities across Canada.

Debbie Down, Director, Community Relations, Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life had this to say about FESA:

"We applaud your continued commitment to improving adult literacy, and providing underserved and at-risk populations with essential skills they need to thrive and be successful in their communities."

First Book Canada Pop-Up

In November 2018, First Books Canada reached out to the Further Education Society to hold their First Book Canada Pop-Up. Over two days, First Books Canada moved over 30,000 books into the office. These books were picked up by members of First Books Canada and distributed to the children. There were books stacked four feet high. People left with armfuls and big smiles. FESA was glad they could help such a great organization.


Family Literacy Day

Every year, Family Literacy Day takes place on February 25th. In 2019, we joined with Aspen Family's Heart of South Calgary (HOSC) to host an event.

FESA provided all the participants with free learning kits, filled with books, educational toys and activities. We set up a craft station, a book exchange table and provided snacks.

Our facilitator Beibei Lu led the groups with stories, nursery rhymes and dancing to get the kids up and moving. The nursery rhymes had everyone giggling and laughing when the group sang and danced together in a circle. Our Indigenous Learning Assistant, Shawna, showed the kids and their parents how to bead keychains. There were big smiles as the children proudly showed off their creations.

As part of winning the **ABC Life Literacy Award**, FESA was given the opportunity to showcase New Beginnings as a model for best practices in the literacy and essential skills sector in a webinar, on October 17th, 2018.



Facilitator story

Working in foundational adult literacy

In July 2016 I answered an advert on Indeed for a position as a contract facilitator with FESA. As an HR and Learning and Development specialist who wanted to do something different and make a contribution, I took a 'well let's try this and see what happens' approach to my application. However, this has turned out to be one of the most enjoyable, interesting, and diverse roles I have ever taken on. In fact, it is my passion for literacy and learning coupled with the variety of community partners and the types of programming I have been involved with since joining the FESA team, that have kept me facilitating, and will inevitably do so going forward.

My experience over the last 3 years has led me to work with some wonderful community partners such as Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, the Canadian Mental Health Association, Women in Need Society, South West Community Resource Centre, and the Calgary Remand Centre. Our programming is quite diverse and these partners have requested most, if not all of what FESA has to offer, such as Literacy and Parenting Skills, Parenting after Violence, and Financial Literacy.

I believe strongly in literacy as both a method of learning and a way of spending



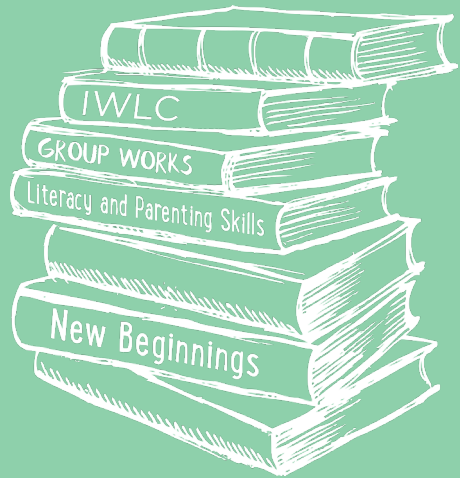
quality time with your children, and the difference these programs make to the confidence, self esteem, knowledge, and skills of our learners is immense and it is incredible to see the enjoyment they get from reading children's books. What has surprised me the most is that even the groups at the Remand Centre have said this is one of the most enjoyable parts of the program we do with them and something they look forward to doing with their children on their release.

For 2019-2020, I am really excited about the new programs our community partners are requesting such as our new Grandparents program due to start in September, a new Healthy Relationships program for late fall, and Life Skills for Indigenous Adults early in the new year.

I have had the pleasure of being heavily involved in the curriculum design of these programs, as well as becoming a facilitator trainer, and am looking forward to seeing how these can continue to support the learning of a wider set of community groups.

One thing I am learning in this role, is the importance of organizations such as FESA in providing critical services to parts of our community that otherwise would not have support in terms of literacy and learning. I have also come to appreciate the diversity of our community here in Calgary and everything it has to offer us.

Written by Del Edwards



Going the Distance

Going the Distance is celebrating! We are celebrating 2 years of the project. We are celebrating the milestones reached, the relationships built along the way, and the many Indigenous community leaders that have championed literacy and essential skills in the workplace.

This year we have seen many components of the Indigenous Workplace Learning Framework developed and run in the community, with employers and with community partners. There has been exciting new developments and partnerships along the way that have highlighted the incredibly innovative and creative nature of all our Indigenous partners.

Grey Eagle Day of Celebration

Going the Distance Partner, Grey Eagle Casino, hosted a “Day of Celebration”, a day for Tsuut’ina Indigenous employees and managers to have their voices heard, to share their success stories, their challenges, and share their advice to other employees and management in attendance. Their input will help shape and customize future programming and training opportunities for current Indigenous Grey Eagle employees and potential new Indigenous employees that may be looking to begin a career at Grey Eagle.

Working in partnership with the Coady Institute

Executive Director Elaine Cairns and GD Project Manager Teal Dratowany visited Coady May 24th to 25th to build the partnership between the organizations and as as a follow-up to a Coady facilitated workshop held at FESA’s offices in April. The workshop trained GD project staff and representatives of First Nations communities in Asset-Based Citizen-Led Development (ABCD) principles. Coady’s Director Women and Indigenous Programming Eileen Alma and teaching staff member Karri-Lynn Paul led the session, which was part of FESA’s Going the Distance initiative.

ABCD’s emphasis on strengths-based learning, relationships, and community driven initiatives aligns with the Indigenous Workplace Learning Framework under development in the Going the Distance project. FESA has the materials and training for programs developed, and Coady’s Indigenous Women in Community Leadership program graduates will be co-facilitating when possible to build community capacity to implement GD. Two graduates, Wyanne Smallboy-Wesley and Kirsten Rider, are already engaged in the project.

Stoney Nakoda

For each program and training in the Stoney Nakoda Community this year, local Elders, councillors, community members

and employers met to review, enhance, and provide input into the programs and training. The programs include Stoney Nakoda language, symbols, and examples of what the 9 essential skills look like in Stoney Nakoda life and traditional activities.

The program uses an Asset-Based approach to help participants identify the essential skills they already have and use throughout their life in relationship to the people and land around them. Participants also build a personal plan to succeed in the workplace, home or school.

We were honoured that the Wesley First Nation HRD/ASETS IWLC program was the first program to pilot the online PhotoVoice app, designed by Dig Insights! PhotoVoice uses photography and

storytelling to uncover how participants view the impact that a program or initiative has had on them, or those around them.

From Stoney Nakoda to Saugeen, building relationships has been a real focus this year and has guided many of the events, programs and trainings. Seeing community leaders, from students to elders, provide direction and input into the programs and training has been inspiring and we look forward to the continued development and evolution of the Indigenous Workplace Learning Framework.



Funded by the Government of Canada through the Adult Learning, Literacy and Essential Skills Program



Celebration of Learning Awards 2019

Jeongeun (Joanna) Shim

Jeongeun (Joanna) Shim is a dedicated and inspiring learner. She was a longtime participant in our Parent Child Mother Goose/Literacy and Parenting Skills (PCMG/LAPS) program facilitated by Beibei Lu. Beibei has witnessed Joanna's ability to conquer her challenges and struggles, including her efforts in balancing her career goal with her duties of parenting two young children. It is Joanna's courage, perseverance and positive energy that inspires Beibei and everyone who interacts with her.

Joanna's commitment and full embracing of the skills she has learned is truly exemplary of the spirit of lifelong learning.

Joanna has been taking the PCMG/LAPS program at the Calgary Pregnancy Care Centre since October 2016. She came with her daughter, Amy, who was 6 months old and is now 3 years old. Joanna's son, Dave, joined the same program when he was 9 months old and is now 14 months old. Joanna's husband, David, would sometimes participate in the program together with Joanna and their children when he was available. The couple showed great passion in learning nursery songs and rhymes.

"[Joanna] is a believer and a practitioner of the literacy and parenting skills learned from my program and is able to incorporate those skills into her family routines with her children."

According to Joanna, she has observed both of her children's improved social development demonstrated by their friendly interaction with other children and adults in a supportive group environment created by this program.

I was impressed by Amy with her active helping in tidying up the classroom and caring for other younger children. Moreover, Joanna and her husband have created their family routines in singing the songs and rhymes learned from the program. As a result, Amy is advanced in language and literacy development. Amy is very interested in reading and singing. She's able to recognize the alphabets and is competent in counting numbers.

Joanna is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Nursing program at Mount Royal University. Due to her schooling, she is unable to attend further PCMG/LAPS sessions. She and her lovely children, Amy and Dave, will be sincerely missed. Wish her and her family all the best!

Written by Beibei Lu



Joanna Shim
is the winner of our
**Celebration of
Learning Award 2019**
Outstanding
Learner



Pamela Lamb
is the winner of our
**Celebration of
Learning Award 2019**
Outstanding
Facilitator/Trainer

Pamela Lamb

Pam started as a facilitator in our Calgary programs ten years ago. Since then, her involvement with FESA has expanded and she has been a valuable contributor to our Indigenous-related projects and programs. Pam’s contributions include writing curriculum, training and mentoring new facilitators, and designing and delivering training workshops.

We reached out to Pam to ask her a few questions about her time with FESA.

What keeps you facilitating for FESA after all these years?

Elaine has given me a lot of rope, and most of the time it is fun and challenging! Also, it’s the people I get to meet along the way.

Why do you think it is important to teach literacy and essential skills?

To me, literacy and essential skills are really just skills that help people have a bigger, better life. I think that is something we all want and everyone has a right to have.

What’s one of your favourite moments from the past year of facilitating?

One of my most memorable moments was at a workshop we were delivering where there was a lot of suspicion about what we were doing. The group wasn’t gelling as well as I was hoping. Then during a hands-on activity, a participant made a beautiful doll. She presented it to another group that works with women who have experienced

domestic violence. She wanted the women to take the doll back and use it with their groups at their centre. It was a profoundly touching moment.

What’s one thing you’re excited about that’s coming up in 2019/2020?

FESA is in a time of tremendous growth and there are so many moving parts. It’s great to be part of the process and I’m excited to see where it leads when many of the pieces fall into place.

Who, or what, was your biggest teacher?

The people along the way – the participants that show up to sessions who have the courage and will to make a difference in their families’ lives, the front-line workers that share their expertise and wisdom in workshops, my many mentors, especially cultural mentors who help us build better bridges.

What’s one thing you’re learning now, and why is it important?

I’m becoming more and more aware of the importance of the question, “from who’s perspective are we looking?” What lens am I using? It helps me better shape the work I do.

Pam is a “kind, intelligent, thoughtful and patient mentor and co-trainer” who is “diligent in improving and learning from every delivery of content.”

- Karri-Lynn, Pam’s co-trainer and friend



Dig Insights

Dig Insights is a marketing research and evaluation firm based in Toronto and the external evaluator for our Going the Distance project. We recognize their significant contributions to FESA, including the development of the PhotoVoice app which has given us tremendous insight into our Going the Distance participants.

We reached out to Patricia King, VP of Evaluation, and Marshal Rodrigues, Evaluation Manager, to learn more about Dig, evaluation and their partnership with us on Going the Distance.

Why has Dig leveraged emerging technologies into the field of evaluation?

As evaluators, our job is to support our clients as they design, develop, implement and reflect upon the programming they offer to their clients. To do this effectively, we need to speak to the participants in a way that is familiar to them – and in today's world, that means we always need to consider a tech solution. Technology not only leads to higher engagement, it also helps overcome the limitations of traditional methodologies. By using emerging technology, participants are no longer limited by reading ability, geographical location or language proficiency to partake in evaluation. They can use their voice, pictures and even emojis to share their experience.

Participants don't have to wait ten weeks to express what they've learned throughout the program. Through technology we can communicate with participants on an ongoing basis and capture their learnings as they are happening – it is a game changer!

What makes the PhotoVoice app an innovative tool for users? For Dig?

At Dig, we have seen the impact of technology on how we talk to consumers in market research. However, while technology has been advancing, the evaluation field has been slow to incorporate it into our traditional methodologies. We see the over usage of in-person and telephone surveys, as well as in-person focus groups that only occur once or twice during the entirety of a program.

Dig developed PhotoVoice to provide users the ability to take evaluation into their own hands. The platform takes the learnings of social media (think Instagram and Facebook) and allows participants to upload photos or videos to show the impact the program has had on them in real time. They can provide a caption and hashtag to show that they understand and can apply their learnings from inside the classroom to outside situations. PhotoVoice also provides a fun and innovative way to capture qualitative and quantitative data, while interacting and learning from others in the program.

Tell us about storytelling as a research method. In what ways can storytelling inform design, participation and evaluation?

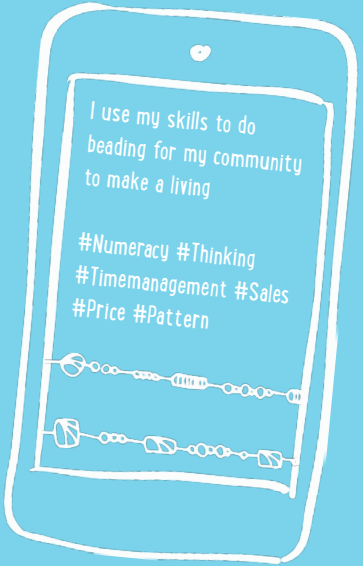
Storytelling is one of the most traditional forms of evaluation. It clearly demonstrates the changes a person, community, and organization has experienced from the beginning to the end of the intervention. It's an approachable method that is culturally sensitive and can be easily customized to users' needs and abilities.

When storytelling is identified as an appropriate method for an evaluation, it helps frame all the work that is being done. Storytelling helps place the user in control of the evaluation. It is their story to tell – so we look for methods that will allow them to share their story, whether through the PhotoVoice app, site visits, using visual representations, interviews or video recordings.

When writing evaluation reports, it's sometimes difficult to showcase the participants' journey. Through storytelling, we bring their journey to life by including more individual call outs and case studies so that the end user of the report can really feel the impact of the program.

For more of of this exciting interview with Dig Insights, please visit our website:

www.furthered.ca/blog



Our people



Donna Rapp
President



Ian Kennedy
Past President



Jenna Truong
Vice President



Paul Rowe
Treasurer

Board

We are governed by a volunteer board whose commitment to the organization is important to our success.



Sade Auger
Secretary



Alesia Fieldberg
Director



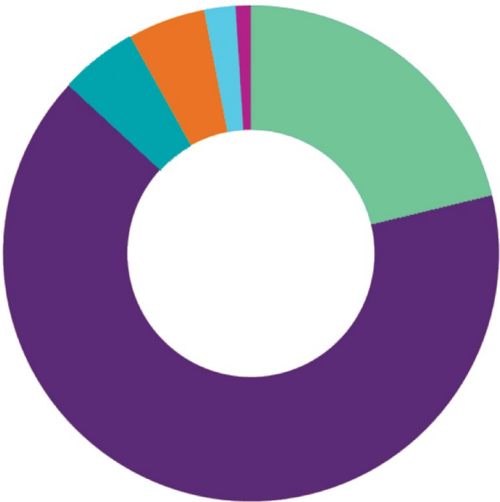
Devedda Kumar
Director



Jessica Spicer
Director

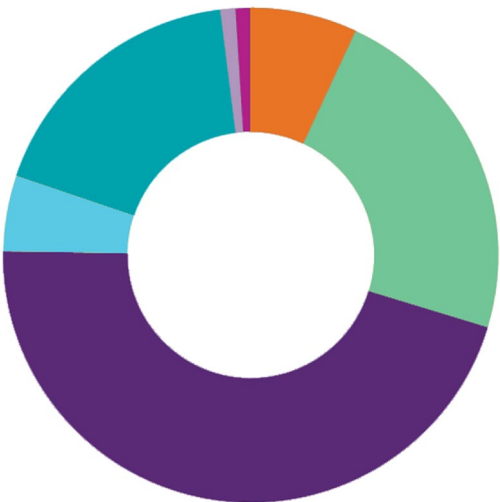
Our finances

Income - \$1,013,449



- Grants - Special Projects 65%
- Grants - Calgary Programs 21%
- Casino 5%
- Fundraising 5%
- Training Revenue 2%
- Other 1%

Expenses - \$1,006,475



- Special Projects Delivery 46%
- Calgary Programs Delivery 23%
- Facilitator Training 18%
- Administrative 7%
- Program Development 5%
- Marketing and Promotion 1%
- Fundraising 1%

Thank you to our supporters

The Further Education Society would like to express our heartfelt thanks to our supporters, the community groups, philanthropic partners, governments, individual donors and those who attend trainings and purchase resources.

As a not-for-profit, we are reliant on the generosity of our supporters and the ongoing connections with our partner organizations to ensure the continued delivery of the life changing work that we do.

Donors and supporters

Alberta Lottery Fund (AGLC)
ABC Life Literacy Canada
Bearspaw Benevolent Foundation
Burns Memorial Fund
Calgary Learns
Centre For Literacy
Carol McCullough
Community Futures Treaty Seven
Donna Rapp
Sara Sharun
Kimberly Kavanagh
Joanne L Good
Teal Dratowany
Community Learning Network
Copy Repro Inc.
Elaine Cairns
Excellence in Literacy Foundation

Family & Community Support Services
Government of Alberta
Government of Canada
Grey Eagle Resort and Casino
Shaw Charity Classic
Shaw Birdies for Kids presented by AltaLink
Stoney Nakoda Resort & Casino
Vinnia Van Overdyk
Wendell Business Solutions
Wise Resources



Shaw Charity Classic 2019

It was banner year for Birdies for Kids, the Shaw Charity Classic, and the Further Education Society.

FESA has been involved with Birdies for Kids since the beginning. Last year the Shaw Charity Classic raised \$12,357,863 and in total has raised over \$34 million for over 180 children and youth-based charities in Alberta.

Between February 1st and September 1st, Birdies for Kids matched all money raised by the participating charities by up to 50%.

FESA held a fundraising 'Families First Raffle'. All the money raised along with direct donations helps us to continue bringing Calgary our free family learning programs.

At FESA, we would like to thank Shaw, the Shaw Charity Classic, Shaw Birdies for Kids presented by AltaLink, and everyone who came to the event and supported all the charities involved. Additionally, we would like to thank WestJet, Canadian Rocky Mountain Resorts, and Board President Donna Rapp for their donated prizes that were raffled off through the Families First Raffle.

Board President Donna Rapp also hosted a fundraising Wine and Cheese in June. All proceeds were donated to the Shaw Charity Classic fundraising event.

Thanks to everyone's support and care, we can continue build communities through literacy and learning!

Partner organizations

Alcove Recovery Centre
Aspen Hand in Hand Parent Link Centre, NE
Aspen Heart of the South
Aspen Village Square/McKnight
Calgary Housing, 872 4th Ave SW
Calgary Housing, Falconridge Community Shed
Calgary John Howard Society
Calgary Pregnancy Care Centre
Calgary Remand Centre
Canadian Mental Health Association
CCIS LINC Program
CCIS Parent Link Centre
Discovery House
Immigrant Services Calgary (Genesis)
Immigrant Services Calgary Mosaic Family Resource Centre
North East Family Connections
South East Calgary Community Resource Centre
SouthWest Communities Resource Centre
Women in Need Society (WINS) Erin Woods
WINS Bridgeland
WINS Dover
WINS Temple
YWCA Employment Resource Centre
YWCA Parent Link Centre

WINS
WOMEN IN NEED SOCIETY

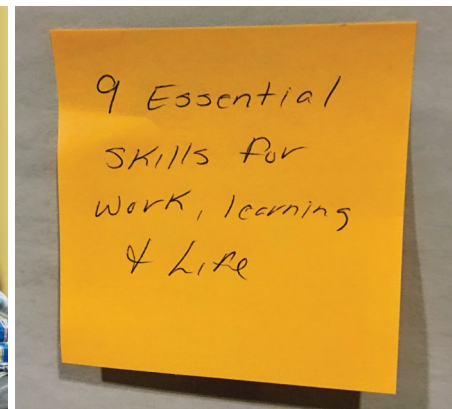


This year we would like to highlight Women In Need Society (WINS) as an outstanding program partner for 2018-2019.

WINS has been partnering with FESA for many years and it has been dedicated to conducting FESA's ESL Reading and Writing Circle program at various location across Calgary including Dover, Bridgeland, Temple and Erin Woods.

We would like to thank WINS for all their efforts in helping and making the program successful with hard work and dedication.







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Strengthening Communities

