

2020 Report of COMMUNITY GIVING



Western
FINANCIAL GROUP
Communities Foundation

Building Healthier
Communities One
Step at a Time



...we are stronger together and our collective efforts make a difference for our employees, customers and the communities where we live, work, and play.



**Laurette LaPlante, Director
Western Financial Group Communities Foundation**



Message from Western Financial Group Communities Foundation Director

Welcome to 2021. This year marks two decades of the Western Financial Group Communities Foundation!

Over the past 20 years, our generous donors, partners, and team members have enabled us to make significant investments to over 1,248 community programs and initiatives across Canada. To date, our total contributions total just over \$4 million! We hope to triple our contributions over the next 20 years!

Overcoming Obstacles

2020 proved to be challenging for many of us. With the elimination of gatherings and social events, our celebrations had to be modified, and fundraising initiatives that brought our communities together were impacted.

Western Financial Group, along with our corporate sponsors, stepped up to help us continue our community giving. We are so thankful for their support. Even in these difficult times, Western and the Foundation contributed over \$500,000 to our communities in 2020 through our three pillars of giving:



Developing Leaders of the Future

We are focused on developing future leaders within our communities.



Strengthening our Communities

We are committed to helping develop, improve and maintain the places where our communities gather.



Taking care of our communities in a time of need

We are here to help our communities when they need us most.

This past year has taught us that we are stronger together. Our collective efforts make a difference for our employees and the communities where we live, work, and play.

I am proud of the impact we achieved in 2020 and look forward to more significant changes in 2021 and over the next 20 years.

Laurette LaPlante, Director

The Foundation would like to thank the following board members on their retirement. Tom Dutton, Linda Tamboline and Don Tannas.



Western Financial Group Communities Foundation Board of Directors
Kenny Nicholls, Nancy Green, Jennifer Huard, Scott Tannas, Joe Sirianni



Western Financial Group Communities Foundation Giving Overview



Thanks to all our supporters in 2020, Western gave back over \$500,000 to our communities across Canada. Your impact is visible in the change we've seen throughout the year.

2020 Giving breakdown



Community Resources

\$154,223



Schools & Educations

\$115,393



Health

\$24,703



Food & Nutrition

\$186,532



Animals

\$42,235

Behind each giving category above are, hundreds of stories about our people, communities, sponsors, and organizations rallying together to make our country a better place.

We've shared just some of these stories of hope below.

Community Food and Nutrition Emergency Fund Program

In the wake of COVID-19, Western Financial Group realized that our communities had been hit hard with a need for support like never before. It has always been part of Western's mission to give back to the communities that give us so much in return. That is why Western Financial Group, in partnership with the Western Financial Group Communities Foundation, launched the Community Food & Nutrition Emergency Fund Program in 2020.



We are so thankful for Western Financial Group's generous gift of \$3,500. COVID-19 has sent more Manitobans to food banks than hospitals, and the road to recovery is long. As we celebrate 35 years of nourishing our community together, we're honored to provide more than 1,000 meals to our neighbors struggling to get through this pandemic.

Karen Taylor-Hughes, CEO, Winnipeg Harvest

With our people's support on the ground, we donated \$75,500 to registered organizations in communities where we operate. These funds help ensure everyone in these communities can access food during these difficult times.



Because of you, these emergency funds fed over 300,000 Canadians.



Visit [Manitoba Harvest](#) to learn more about who they are and what we have accomplished together.

Protecting those who can't protect themselves



In 2020, through our Western Financial Group employees and communities' hard work, the Western Financial Group Communities Foundation donated a combined total of over \$42,000 to animal-based initiatives across Canada.



Our team members who experienced the 2013 High River flood crisis, firsthand, were deeply impacted by how many pets were displaced in the aftermath. We quickly realized that our beloved fur friends also need help when a crisis hits. A quick phone call to AARCS highlighted the struggle most animal rescues, shelters, and charities face during this pandemic. Our team wanted to do whatever we could to help alleviate the additional demands being placed on these amazing organizations.



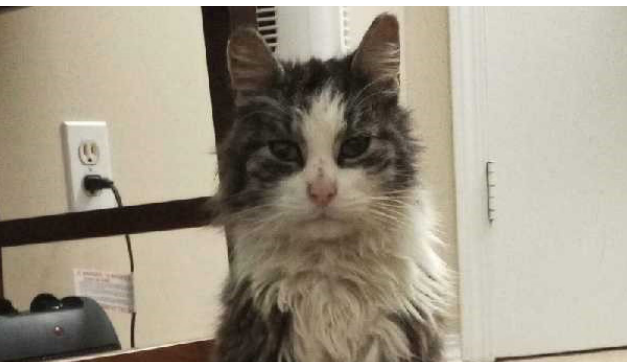
**Tara Belland, Insurance Advisor (Okotoks)
Western Financial Group**



Our team in Nanaimo chose the North Island Wildlife Recovery Association (NIWRA) to support for our fundraising in 2020. One of the main reasons we chose this charity is that animals tend to be forgotten when it comes to charities or donations – especially animals other than dogs and cats. These charities do not receive government funding, they rely solely on donations from the public. Living on Vancouver Island, we are surrounded by wildlife, one of our favorite things about where we live. To help wildlife thrive, we rely on the good people of the NIWRA to nurse sick and injured animals back to health. Once ready, they are released back into the wild or continue their care if the animal is unfortunately not able to go back into the wild.



**Teresa Wenner, Assistant Manager (Nanaimo),
Western Financial Group**



Everyone on the Dawson Creek team is an animal lover. When one of our own found a sick and abandoned cat last fall, we decided as a group that we would fundraise for its care. The cat was taken to the SPCA for treatment and recovery. Brett made sure to follow up to see how the cat was faring. Happily, the cat did recover and will be adopted out. Our donation paid for a good portion of the medical costs, which was our goal.



**Jennifer Combres, Managing Partner
(Dawson Creek) Western Financial Group**



Since 2001, you have helped us contribute to over 108 animal-based organizations.



Visit **NIWRA** and **AARCS** to learn more about who they are and what we have accomplished together.

Transcona Museum



CN 2747 is a historically significant railway artifact in Transcona, a suburb located in Winnipeg, Manitoba. It was the first steam locomotive built in Western Canada and the first constructed at the CN Transcona Shops. The steam locomotive also seems to be the only surviving example of the 33 steam engines built in the Transcona shops between 1926 and 1938. These distinctions make CN 2747, a valuable historical artifact worth preserving for current and future generations. The goal of the overall preservation of CN 2747 is to bring the engine back to a safe, stable, secure and attractive condition.

“
The \$5,000 Infrastructure Grant donated will be used to take the project into the next phase of the preservation project. We are currently working to build a protective structure over the engine.”

Alanna Horejda, Museum Curator

“
As a long-standing Transcona business, we are proud to be a part of the preservation of this historic locomotive, to be able to share this important piece of our community history with future generations.”

**Lynn Dolphin, Assistant Manager,
Wyatt Dowling Insurance**



Visit [Transcona Museum](#) to learn more about who they are and what we have accomplished together.

A Loving Home for Every Child

SOS Children's Village is a village by name, but it is home for the foster children and parents who live there. It is a space that offers a unique model of healing and functions to provide certain things that the children have lost. The village offers a sense of community, connection and belonging, in a system where isolation is all too frequent. SOS Children's Village owns five foster homes and a village center on their 2.5 acres campus. They also have seven homes integrated into surrounding areas. They have also built five transition suites for homeless youth who age out of the foster care system when they turn 19.

“
Our team at Western Coast Semiahmoo branch chooses organizations that help kids and youth because we feel strongly about it, and it allows us to maximize our donations. We chose SOS Children's Village for our organization of choice in 2020, as they help so many children transition into adulthood as they come out of foster care. As children get older, they have less of a chance to get into a foster home, and once they hit the age of majority, they no longer have this assistance. SOS Children's Village gives them a safe and secure home. They help them feel confident and assist them in life's trials and tribulations.”

The Foundation is very important to our business as it empowers us to bring awareness to many different programs in need of support. Helping our customers understand the different programs they have the opportunity to support in their own community is what community is all about!

Signe Olson, Branch Manager (Semiahmoo) Western Coast Insurance



In 2020, the Foundation invested in 25 Infrastructure Projects totaling \$125,000.



Visit [SOSBC](#) to learn more about who they are and what we have accomplished together.



Halo Air Ambulance



Over the past three years, the Western Financial Group's Medicine Hat team has donated \$10,000 to HALO Air Ambulance, the only medivac helicopter dedicated to serving southern Alberta with the capability of also serving southwest Saskatchewan.

“Our communities have always been generous with their support of the HALO Air Ambulance program. Through the generosity of foundations such as the Western Financial Group Communities Foundation, we can continue operating our life saving service, especially in remote and difficult to access areas. We received more than 200 calls for service last year, and over half of these were lifesaving! The Western Financial Group Communities Foundation supports HALO Air Ambulance because minutes matter.”

Kim Simpson, Executive Director of HALO Air Ambulance



“HALO depends on being funded exclusively by donations, with no government assistance. We live here, and we feel this is a great organization that helps in times of need, especially for the benefit of our community and Southern Alberta.”

Tracey Arcand, Branch Manager (Medicine Hat) Western Financial Group

“I know it won't keep Halo in the air for very long BUT, if everyone did what they could, it would. A few of our clients have been on this helicopter, fortunately, they are here to talk about it, which is why it is so important to me!”

Aaron Fleming, Account Executive, (Medicine Hat) Western Financial Group



In 2020, the Foundation supported a total of 873 projects.



Visit [Halo Air Ambulance](#) to learn more about who they are and what we have accomplished together.

Celebrating our 2020 Western Inspirational Award Winner



The Western Financial Group Communities Foundation gifts the Western Inspirational Award annually to local students who have displayed outstanding community and/or school spirit and have demonstrated inspirational conduct and/or overcome adversity.

The following is a story about one of our 2020 Western Inspirational Award recipients, Mackenzie Neufeld. Mackenzie is described by her high school representative as a resilient, hardworking, and dedicated student with amazing school and community spirit. During her grade 12-year volunteering at many school initiatives and events, Mackenzie spent her Friday afternoons helping to sort food at the Okotoks Food Bank. She was a camp counsellor at preschool summer camps, tutored other students, and so much more.

“ I feel absolutely blessed to have been the recipient of the Western Inspirational Award because to me, it is a recognition of not only effort and achievement but of perseverance. Having been diagnosed with both ADHD and a learning disability this past year, the whole concept of ‘learning’ was never something that came easy to me. I did have to persevere through a lot. But quite honestly, I believe that through struggles comes inspiration.

After graduating from high school, I was accepted into the University of Alberta to major in physics. However, I was also recently accepted into the Faculty of Arts to major in philosophy. I know this is where I'm meant to be. My goal for my future is to become a professor, either for theology or philosophy. Through teaching, I hope to inspire and motivate other students to love learning as much as I do and to persevere through whatever obstacles they may encounter through their academic career.



Mackenzie Neufeld, 2020 Western Inspirational Award Recipient



Because of you, we gifted 121 Western Inspirational Awards to deserving students in 2020 - thank you!



Visit westerngives.ca to learn more about who we are and what we have accomplished together.

We Are Stronger Together



Assiniboia and Willow Bunch are located in southern Saskatchewan and support and serve the people of many small communities nearby. This collective work ethic is truly an example of how we are stronger together and the impact a giving culture can have.

“ Our office is very proud of the contributions we make to our communities, thanks to the Western Financial Group Communities Foundation programming. The ability to give back and show the pride we have for our town and surrounding areas is always something the group looks forward to each year. ”

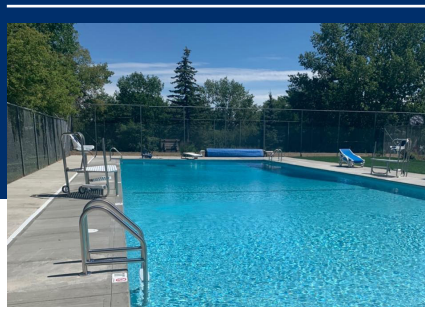
Marissa Gellner, Personal Lines Sales & Services Centre Leader, Western Financial Group

“ I have been the team champion for the Foundation for 10 years. I am grateful to have this opportunity to help my community with different grants and bursary awards given each year to a deserving student. ”

Lori Hildebrandt, Foundation Team Champion (Assiniboia), Western Financial Group

The Assiniboia team has supported many programs and initiatives in Assiniboia and its surrounding areas. Since 2006, they have invested over \$57,099 into our local communities. Some examples of their support include:




- new uniforms for the Assiniboia Minor Ball Association
- \$5,000 to the Limerick Daycare in 2014 to upgrade their playground equipment
- remodeling of the Willow Bunch Swimming Pool
- repairs for the Glentworth's local rink
- \$5,000 contribution to the Limerick Fire Department for their new fire truck



Be Part of Our Story

No matter how or where you choose to contribute to our mission of creating healthier communities, rest assured that your support is making a difference.

Three ways to help us make a difference:

-  Visit your local branch page on westerngives.ca to learn about what your community is doing through WCF.
-  Donate to the Western Financial Group Communities Foundation.
-  Consider becoming a [corporate sponsor](#).

Thank you

for supporting our work and for helping us create a community we can all be proud of.



Visit westerngives.ca to learn more about who we are and what we have accomplished together.



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Thank You National Champion Sponsors



DONATIONS OF 30K!