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ANNUAL REPORT

Message from the Board Chairs

As we stand at the helm of the Central Okanagan Foundation, we are filled with immense pride and gratitude. Since taking on our roles as co-chairs in the fall of 2023, we have been privileged to witness the resilience and dedication that are the hallmarks of our organization. Our involvement with the Grants Committee over the years has been invaluable, shaping our leadership and guiding our vision for the foundation.

The past few years have been a period of significant transition, especially in the executive leadership. Amidst these changes, the foundation has continued to grow and evolve, a testament to the strength and adaptability of our team. We are thrilled to welcome Kristine Bugayong as our new Executive Director, who joined us in September 2023. Her innovative leadership and fresh perspectives are set to lead the foundation into a promising future.

We must extend a special note of gratitude to Cheryl Miller, who served as the Interim Executive Director during this transitional phase. Her resolute leadership and steadfast commitment have been instrumental in maintaining the foundation's stability and success. As Cheryl embarks on her well-deserved retirement after 15 years of dedicated service, her absence will be keenly felt by the board and the broader community she has so passionately served.

We want to express our heartfelt appreciation to our donors and all the COF staff. Your patience and

support during our leadership transition have been invaluable. Your unwavering belief in our mission has been a source of strength and inspiration, allowing us to navigate these changes with confidence and grace. The Board of Directors would like to express our gratitude to Anita Boehm, for her dedication and engagement during her term as Board Chair.

We are also excited to announce the renewal of our federal contract for the Reaching Home Program for another two years. This is a testament to the federal government's confidence in our team and the impactful work we are doing. It is initiatives like these that demonstrate our commitment to making a tangible difference in our community.

Looking forward, we remain dedicated to fostering a compassionate and vibrant community in the Central Okanagan region. Together, we have faced challenges and celebrated achievements, and it is this collective strength that will carry us into the future.

In closing, we extend our sincerest thanks to each of you for being an integral part of our journey. Your involvement is essential to our mission. We look forward to another year of growth, challenges, and successes, confident that with your support, we will achieve great things.

Karen Hill & Dustyn Baulkham
Co-Chairs,
Central Okanagan Foundation

Board Members



Marni Adams
Director



Dusytn Baulkham
Co-Chair & Secretary



Karen Hill
Co-Chair



Kim Inglis
Director



Graham Moir
Treasurer

Donor Story: Stomp & Step – Rhindress Music

When wildfires hit the Central Okanagan in August 2023, musicians Jim and Kim Rhindress knew they had to act. This power duo decided to gather a few of their friends and do what they do best—perform and fundraise.

On September 29, 2023, a packed crowd filled the OK Corral to attend Stomp & Step, a fundraiser held to support the Central Okanagan Foundation's 2023 Wildfire Response Fund. Attendees were treated to a fun evening of country music as they sang and danced with the performers.

"We knew for sure we were good at putting on events and raising money, so we gave ourselves time to create a really good event. We gave ourselves five weeks to organize and promote it to really fill that place," says Kim. "Jim and I can't take credit for all of it. We were the instigators and organizers, but we put together a great team of people."

The couple has long supported various organizations in Kelowna by raising money through their performances. "We don't have a lot of money, we're working musicians, but we do have some abilities and we feel that we can do our part," says Jim.

Choosing to partner with the Central Okanagan Foundation was easy for Jim and Kim. "We knew we didn't want the responsibility of handing out the money. We wanted to find an organization that is well established and has an impeccable reputation in this town," says Kim.

"So when we were thinking of where to give the money, it was a no-brainer to choose the COF because of its history, reputation, and vetting process before the money is released. We said we'll raise the money and the COF can distribute it to whoever may need it."

The couple said that the staff were helpful and responded to every question they had.

Jim and Kim believe that anyone can give and that every single one of us can be a philanthropist. Kim says that the "secret sauce" of any fundraising initiative is to provide easy opportunities for people to give. "A lot of people would like to help and sometimes they just don't know how."



Jim & Kim Rhindress

Jim relates that at a performance at one of the seniors' facilities, he and Kim spoke about the Stomp & Step event and informed the audience of its purpose. "This sweet lady leaves and comes back with a quilt that she made. I mean it's a king-size quilt and she says take this and see what you could get from it. It was embroidered and took her hundreds of hours to make. It was amazing." That quilt was among more than 20 items that attendees could choose from at the silent auction table during the event.

Stomp & Step raised over \$21,000 to support various relief and recovery efforts of local charities helping those affected by the wildfires in the Central Okanagan.



What make us Unique

Central Okanagan Foundation is your best choice for enduring community philanthropy because of our...



Balanced approach to philanthropy, targeting your short and long-term goals



In-depth community knowledge, ensuring that you are making the most strategic giving decisions



Customized Giving, you have a choice of how and where your gift can be directed



Fiscally responsible, low-cost philanthropy, with a deliberate and prudent approach



Extensive experience working with local professional advisors

Grant Story: Salvation Army



In the summer of 2023, the McDougall Creek wildfire swept through our community and presented enormous challenges. The Westside Salvation Army quickly pivoted to address the immediate needs of those impacted, providing evacuees with essential supplies, warm meals, and a comforting sense of community.

The Central Okanagan Foundation played a pivotal role in supporting the Westside Salvation Army's wildfire relief efforts. An initial grant of \$11,000 was awarded early in the crisis to purchase additional emergency supplies and expand support services to meet the immediate needs of evacuees.

As the wildfire raged on, the need to establish a collaborative response to support evacuees became apparent. The McDougall Creek Wildfire Recovery and Resiliency Centre provided a central location

for evacuees to access immediate support as well as supports throughout recovery. Evacuees could access insurance supports, mental health supports, rent relief and more in a central location, reducing the stress of retelling their story to multiple service providers.

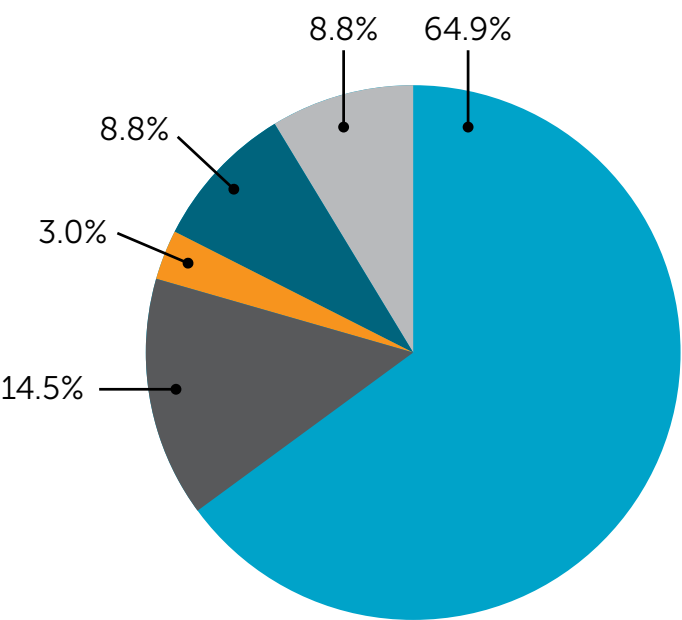
With a second \$100,000 contribution from the Central Okanagan Foundation raised through the Wildfire Response Fund, the Westside Salvation Army was able to issue relief grants to evacuees to help with rent and housing support as well as basic needs like food, transportation, and clothing.

The collaborative response to the 2023 wildfires demonstrated the power of local organizations working together to ensure that no one was left behind in the process of recovery. The legacy of this collaboration remains—a testament to the strength that arises when a community unites in the face of adversity.

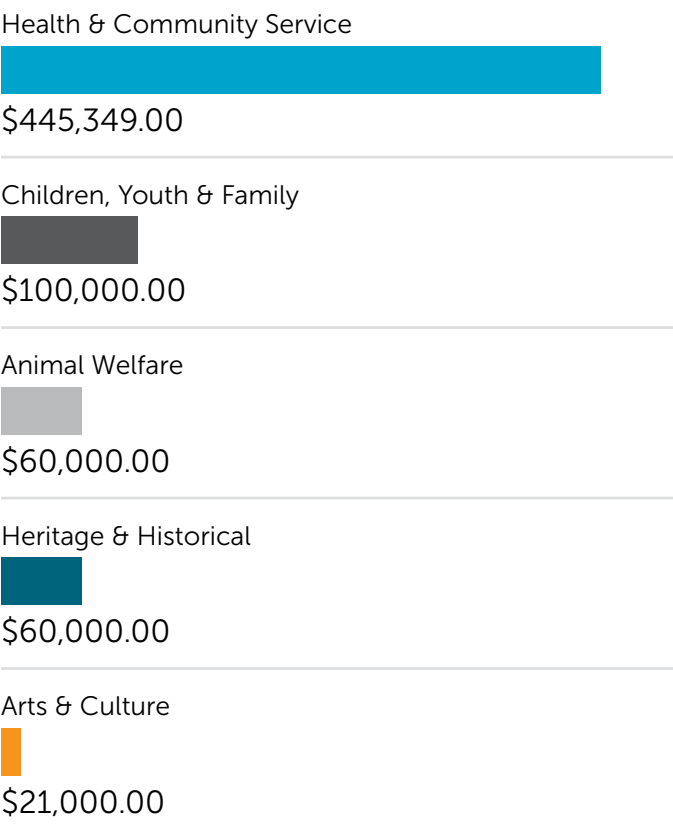
Community Grants Program: Fall 2022 and Spring 2023

Total Grants

\$686,349.00



Grant Distribution



Community Services Recovery Fund

Organization Name	Total Approved
Community Recreational Initiatives Society	\$25,600.00
Project Literacy Central Okanagan Society	\$59,000.00
Kelowna Museums Society	\$59,503.00
Okanagan Artists Alternative Association	\$48,600.00
Kelowna Community Resources Society	\$87,863.00
The Bridge Youth & Family Services Society	\$60,850.00
Elevation Outdoors Experiential Programs Association	\$16,506.00
Kelowna Gospel Mission Society	\$55,628.00
Lake Country Health Society	\$62,450.00
Central Okanagan Region Nutrition Society	\$60,000.00
BrainTrust Canada Association	\$50,000.00
Total	\$586,000.00

Total Funds
\$586,000.00

Funded by the Government
of Canada's Community
Services Recovery Fund



Ways to Give

We offer strategic ways for individuals, families, corporations, and organizations to give with impact. We will work with you to create a plan with both short and long-term giving options that fulfill your philanthropic goals. Your Endowment Fund options are:

Community Fund

You leave it up to us and our grants committees to ensure the community's most pressing and relevant needs are supported.

Field of Interest Fund

Investment income is targeted to address a specific area you feel is important in the community, such as Arts, Health, or the Environment.

Donor Designated

You select your favourite charities and we ensure that they are supported, forever.

Donor Advised Fund

A donor advised fund allows you to choose which charities you want to support each year.

Agency Fund

Gives registered charities the option to create their own endowment, building a sustainable source of funding.

Gift in Will

Leave a bequest in your will that will help you support your favourite causes after you are gone, leaving a lasting legacy.

Grant Story: Brain Trust Canada

In 2023, the Central Okanagan Foundation administered the Community Services Recovery Fund in collaboration with Community Foundations of Canada and the Government of Canada. This \$400 million fund was created to help Canadian charities and non-profits impacted by the pandemic to adapt and modernize.

Through this funding, the Central Okanagan Foundation distributed \$586,000 to 11 organizations. One of those organizations was BrainTrust Canada, which is dedicated to supporting individuals with acquired brain injuries.

The \$50,000 grant awarded to BrainTrust Canada exemplifies the fund's purpose in action. Thanks to this support, BrainTrust Canada engaged in comprehensive strategic planning, ensuring that its programs are not only sustained but also refined to better meet the evolving needs of the community.

This funding has, "enabled BrainTrust Canada to develop a strategic plan that is not only innovative

but also responsive to the evolving needs of our community in the post-pandemic era. With this support, we are enhancing our organizational capacity to deliver services more effectively and to embrace new approaches that will benefit those we serve. This strategic advancement underscores our commitment to continuous improvement and adaptation in a changing world, ensuring that we remain a resilient and impactful force in our community," says Executive Director Amanda McFarlane.

The Community Services Recovery Fund underscores the importance of collaborative efforts in navigating challenges and rebuilding communities post crisis. By providing financial assistance and strategic support, the fund aims to strengthen the resilience of non-profits, allowing them to play a pivotal role in community recovery and development.

The fund's purpose extends beyond immediate recovery efforts, emphasizing the importance of sustained support for non-profits as they play an integral role in shaping the future well-being of the community.



Funded by the Government
of Canada's Community
Recovery Fund

| Canada 

Grant Story: Interior Wildlife Rehabilitation Society (IWRS)

Founded in 2020, the Interior Wildlife Rehabilitation Society (IWRS) has been at the forefront of wildlife rehabilitation, providing critical care to animals in distress while educating the public about the importance of wildlife conservation. From beavers to swans and geese, the organization has dedicated itself to rehabilitating and releasing native wildlife back into their natural habitats - with a focus on aquatic species.

A pivotal moment in the organization's journey was the acquisition of a \$15,000 grant from the Central Okanagan Foundation, specifically designated for the purchase of nursery containers. These containers have been instrumental in creating a safe and nurturing environment for young animals in the rehabilitation process. The funding allowed IWRS to improve its nursery facilities, providing a comfortable space for orphaned animals to develop and thrive under the watchful eye of licensed wildlife rehabilitators.

In the fall of 2022, IWRS received another grant of \$15,000 from the Central Okanagan Foundation. This grant was allocated for the purchase of a much needed rehabilitation truck, which has played a crucial role transporting building materials for the facilities ongoing expansions, as well as picking up animal feed and patients themselves. It has significantly reduced the pressure on the society's volunteers to use personal cars for transporting injured or orphaned animals from their partner vet clinics to the facility as well as facilitating the release of rehabilitated wildlife back into the wild.



The year 2023 brought another milestone for IWRS with a generous \$45,000 operational grant from the foundation. This substantial funding injection bolstered the organization's overall capacity to care for wildlife. The operational grant has enabled IWRS to enhance its facilities, invest in medical equipment, and expand outreach. The organization's ability to expertly assess, rehabilitate, and release wildlife has been greatly amplified thanks to the Central Okanagan Foundation's continuous support.

IWRS has not only become a lifeline for countless animals, but it has also actively engaged the community through its educational initiatives. The organization gives presentations, and outreach programs to the public as well as like-minded groups, fostering a sense of responsibility and awareness about the importance of coexisting with local wildlife. The impact of IWRS extends beyond individual animals, influencing a broader cultural shift towards a more compassionate and sustainable relationship between humans and nature.



Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy



Reaching Home is a community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness across Canada. This program provides funding to urban, Indigenous, rural and remote communities to help them address their local homelessness needs. Reaching Home is designed to support the most vulnerable Canadians in maintaining safe, stable and affordable housing and to reduce chronic homelessness nationally by 50% by 2028.

In Kelowna, the Central Okanagan Foundation acts as the Designated Communities Community Entity.

National Society of Hope

The National Society of HOPE is a non-profit housing society committed to providing housing to women, mothers, and children in transition.

The society's work includes two central locations that provide 18 short-term independent apartment units for women and women with children. Short-term housing units are independent unfurnished suites where residents set self-directed goals and receive additional supports from the society.

The National Society for Hope received a two-year grant from the Reaching Home program.

A participant shared the joy this grant has brought:

"A couple of months ago, amidst a tumultuous time, I moved into an apartment with the Society of Hope in Kelowna. Transition and living in a state of stress can really do a number on your peace of mind. I was scared of what my life would look like living on disability; fear kept me in a bad situation for far too long. Since I moved in, I've been taken care of in so many unexpected ways. I'm often overcome with gratitude that you not only look after my basic needs but allow me to rebuild my dignity and autonomy. Thank you for your kindness; it means the world to people like me."

Funded in part by the Government
of Canada's Reaching Home:
Canada's Homelessness Strategy.

Canada

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FOUNDATION
empowering generations to give.

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