



**VOLUNTEER
ALBERTA**



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION
To strengthen Alberta's nonprofit/voluntary sector organizations through knowledge exchange and strategic connections.

VISION
A strong, engaged and connected society serving the common good in Alberta.



LOOKING BACK ON THE LAST 30 YEARS

2020 is a year not many of us are soon to forget. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic forcing us all to pivot and adapt, Volunteer Alberta (VA) celebrated its 30th anniversary.

Created in 1990 to support Volunteer Centres across Alberta, VA has remained responsive to nonprofit organizations' changing needs around volunteerism. Over 30 years, our focus has remained unchanged – helping Alberta do good, together. Our programs, services and resources have all contributed to assisting organizations in engaging volunteers.

This past year, our focus was on fostering resilience and adaptive capacity in our member organizations in light of an economic downturn

and the global pandemic. We advocated provincially and nationally for the needs of nonprofit organizations and their clients. We developed tools and resources to support virtual volunteerism and public safety. We initiated communities of practice to bring stakeholders together to share experiences and learn from each other. With your input, we redesigned a new membership program and developed our 2021-23 strategic plan.

We are incredibly proud of the work we have achieved together these last 30 years, and we look forward to continuing to support nonprofits and volunteerism in Alberta.

Karen Link, Executive Director

OUR FUNDERS

A special thank you to our funders who made it possible for us to connect, promote and strengthen volunteerism and Alberta's nonprofit sector in 2020.





We connect Alberta's nonprofit sector through network engagement, our membership program and building partnerships with communities.

connect

NETWORKS & ENGAGEMENT

Part of our role is to connect and enhance engagement with organizations in our provincial network. Some highlights of our work and reach in communities across Alberta in 2020 included:

- Serving on the Leadership Exploration and Development in Nonprofits' (LEAD) core steering committee.
- Promoting emerging trends and the future of volunteerism on the Alberta Social Innovation Connect's (ABSI Connect) podcast.
- Co-chairing the advisory committee for the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) 2022 Youth Summit.

FIRST ONLINE AGM

We held our first online AGM in June 2020 via Zoom due to COVID-19 and gathering restrictions. Although we missed seeing our Members in person, our online format helped us reach our membership spread across the province and increase attendance from 2019.

ALBERTA NONPROFIT NETWORK (ABNN)

ABNN played a pivotal role over the past year leading the sector's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. VA was at the ABNN table advocating for emergency funding, adjustments to legislation and insurance liability protection for nonprofits delivering services. The contribution the nonprofit sector made during the pandemic to individual and community well-being was undeniable. We appreciate the VA Members who participated in the series of ABNN sector surveys that helped articulate our sector's value.

ALBERTA VOLUNTEER CENTRE NETWORK (AVCN)

We responded to the Alberta Volunteer Centre Network's needs by engaging our volunteer centres in a province-wide bi-weekly call. We created an informal space to connect, support and learn from one another and explore new ways to address the impacts of COVID-19 in our communities.

MEMBERSHIP

Our members asked. We listened. We offered free membership to support our network with pandemic response and recovery. Our members' engagement and feedback allowed us to continue enhancing our membership program to meet their needs. We hosted our first member orientations to introduce our benefit offerings and other services. They were also a space for our staff and other members across the province to meet and network.

Top three reasons our members sign up:

1. To support the work of Volunteer Alberta.
2. To be part of a provincial network of nonprofits.
3. Access to Volunteer Alberta's programs, services and resources.

CONNECTING MEMBERS ONLINE

The Volunteer Alberta Members Facebook group is an opportunity for members to connect with and learn from peers. In 2020, the Facebook group reached 140 members. We provided information and resources like learning opportunities, tipsheets and sector updates to help our members navigate the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the year.

95%
of members
renewed their
membership
in 2020.

28
Connected
Leaders

195
Members

14
Honorary
Members

7
Network
Leaders

419
Free Members

663
total
Volunteer Alberta
Members

We promote the value of volunteerism and the nonprofit sector for Albertans through advocacy, storytelling and helping communities celebrate National Volunteer Week.

promote

ADVOCATING FOR ALBERTA NONPROFITS AND RECOVERY

COVID-19 severely affected the Alberta nonprofit/voluntary sector resulting in reduced revenue and increased demand for services. We sprung into action by joining Volunteer Canada's Volunteer Centre advocacy campaign. We wrote an open letter to the provincial government to include volunteer centres, nonprofits and charities in Alberta's economic recovery plan. We advocated for a positive working relationship between the government and the sector, including flexible funding options, resources, support for corporate partners and pro-bono services. Nearly 600 Albertans signed the open letter.

ADVOCATING FOR NONPROFIT INSURANCE

Working with ABNN, The Co-operators, and The Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC), we researched nonprofit insurance trends in Canada and Alberta. We supported multiple surveys to understand how increased premiums and reduced coverage availability could affect Alberta. We advocated with IBC for provincial liability immunity to protect nonprofits delivering direct service within public health guidelines during the pandemic.

PROMOTING CHANGES IN VOLUNTEERISM

Volunteerism in Alberta saw some radical shifts due to the pandemic, such as virtual volunteering, risk management and adhering to new health measures. To help guide nonprofits through these changes, we developed and promoted:

- A blog series for volunteering during COVID-19. The series included updates about virtual volunteering, micro-volunteering and stories from our network.
- A series of tip sheets with rules of thumb for sharing volunteers, volunteer screening during a pandemic and risk management.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK (NVW) ENHANCEMENT FUNDING

Every year, the Government of Alberta provides funding for National Volunteer Week Enhancement Funding. Moving into the program's 26th year, we distributed \$64,000 in NVW Grants to 76 organizations across 122 municipalities to celebrate and recognize Alberta's volunteers. Together with the GOA, we expanded the eligible expenses and extended the reporting timelines to provide communities with more flexibility due to the pandemic.

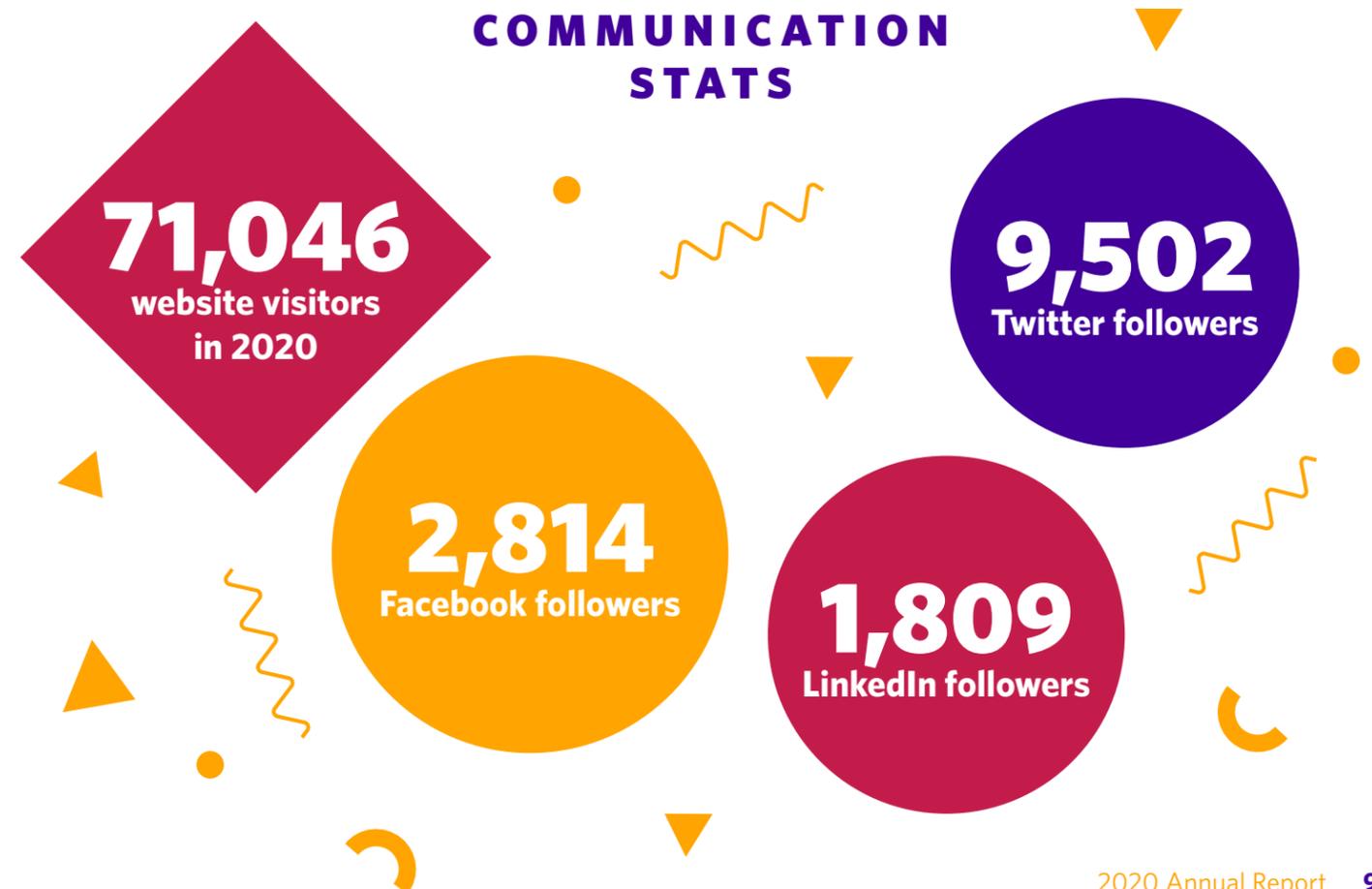
The theme for NVW 2020 was "It's time to applaud this country's volunteers." Despite the challenges and barriers COVID-19 presented, communities demonstrated their creativity and adapted their celebrations to safely thank and cheer on their volunteers.

During NVW, we promoted volunteer stories, volunteerism facts and community celebrations online. Through Facebook, we reached 80,376 people and generated 5,434 engagements, helping to increase the overall awareness of NVW and the impact of Alberta volunteers.

"Thank you for continuing this grant during these uncertain times, we greatly appreciate the opportunity it provided us to engage with our community in a meaningful way."

Dawn Christian, Director at Viking/Beaver Family and Community Support Services

COMMUNICATION STATS



GOOD TOGETHER

Since 1990, Volunteer Alberta has been a leader and voice in the nonprofit sector for volunteer centres and organizations that engage volunteers. Our members have always looked to us for expert advice, guidance, programs, services, and resources to enhance their work and community engagement.

Doray Veno, President, Board of Directors (2013-2015)

Congratulations to the current and previous board members and staff. Thank you for your leadership, vision and action that continues to build resilience internally, in your membership, and across the sector. The true impact of your work is measurable through your magnitude of strong relationships and networks. Thank you for your advocacy, which empowers organizations that engage volunteers with tools, skills, and knowledge to help them navigate challenges and opportunities. Cheers to another 30 years!

TIMELINE

1990 The Association of Volunteer Centres of Alberta (Volunteer Alberta) incorporates as a nonprofit and starts as a member association.

1994 Funding received for the Provincial Volunteer Week Initiative (also known as National Volunteer Week Enhancement Funding) from the Government of Alberta (GoA) and program launches.

1997 New logo developed.

1998 Shelley Borowski hired as the first Executive Director.

2000 Tracey Douglas hired as Executive Director.

2001 Cyndi Harvey hired as Executive Director.

2002 Volunteer Alberta (VA) receives charitable status.

2003 VA selected to be the Provincial Host Centre to administer and support the Alberta Canada Volunteerism Initiative (CVI) Advisory Network.

2004 Voluntary Sector Advancement Program (also known as the Enhanced Capacity Advancement Program) established, and funding received from GoA. Karen Lynch hired as Executive Director.

2005 VA partners with OASSIS to provide access to employee benefits for nonprofits in Alberta.

2006 VA helps establish the Alberta Nonprofit/Voluntary Sector Initiative (ANVSI) as a founding member. VA rebrands.

2007 Alberta CVI Advisory Network program ends. VA partners with The Co-operators to build awareness of insurance offerings and risk management strategies for nonprofits.

2008 VA helps establish Innovative Communities Connecting and Networking (iCCAN) to provide video conferencing services to volunteer centres.

2009 Volunteer Police Information Check Program (VPICP) pilot program begins. Registered name changed to "The Association of Volunteer Centres and Volunteer Engaging Organizations of Alberta."

2010 Rural Alberta Development Fund (RADF) funding received to develop Knowledge-Connector for nonprofit leadership development.

2011 Resource Centre for Voluntary Organizations (RCVO) merges with Volunteer Alberta. KnowledgeConnector launches online. Funding received from GoA for the Serving Communities Internship Program (SCiP) and program launches.

2012 iCCAN nonprofit corporation sold.

2013 Jann Beeston hired as Executive Director

2014 VA partners with Unstoppable Conversations and launches Generative Conversations program to support rural community transformation.

2015 VA rebrands to current branding seen today.

2016 Volunteer Police Information Check (VPICP) revised to current Volunteer Screening Program (VSP). Provincial Volunteer Week Initiative program revised.

2017 Suncor Energy Foundation funding received to support social innovation and collaborative network work. VA helps to establish the Alberta Nonprofit Network (ABNN) as a founding member. VA redesigns and launches new membership program and benefits.

2018 Karen Link hired as Executive Director

2019 Funding received from Canada Services Corps to develop Youth @ the Table (Y@TT) project and program launches. Funding received for Evaluation & Impact Initiative and program launches. SCiP ends.

2020 VA celebrates 30th anniversary.

Jann Beeston, Executive Director (2013-2018)

I am so very proud of Volunteer Alberta. My term as Executive Director with VA was a pleasure - connecting, learning, and working with so many talented and committed people was personally rewarding. In the following years, VA's resilience, adaptability, and growth have been outstanding, especially in volatile times. Many thanks to board and staff, present and past, for your leadership. Congratulations on your 30th anniversary.



**We strengthen and equip
Alberta's nonprofit sector to thrive
through capacity building programs
and learning services.**

strengthen

VOLUNTEER SCREENING PROGRAM (VSP)

Funded by the Government of Alberta and administered by Volunteer Alberta, VSP provides financial and educational support for nonprofits' volunteer screening. In 2020, we provided education to nonprofits that focused on community safety and pandemic-relief volunteering. We provided financial support to organizations by delivering Vulnerable Sector Check Fee Waivers and distributing 13 Volunteer Screening Development Grants. We also conducted a community assessment through focus groups, surveys, and interviews to meet community needs.

"Your training and resources are extremely helpful. Thanks to those classes, we do have [volunteer policies, job descriptions and screening] in place. Thank you for setting up these classes. Don't stop them."

Anonymous VSP program user, Lethbridge Public Library

YOUTH @ THE TABLE (Y@TT)

Following Y@TT's successful pilot year and with the Canada Service Corps' continued support, we welcomed the second cohort of 23 youth participants and 18 host organizations in September 2020. In a time of social and physical distancing, we used the youth and mentor Communities of Practice (CoP) to hold virtual spaces for mutual learning. We also invited youth experts to the Youth CoP to support the continuous development of the participants' governance-related skills and competencies.

EVALUATION & IMPACT INITIATIVE (E&I)

The Evaluation and Impact Initiative is a three-year program that builds evaluation capacity within volunteer centres and, by extension, their clients and communities. In the initiative's second year, we helped volunteer centres demonstrate their impact and value by offering technical evaluation support, evaluation tools and resources, a Community of Practice, and one-on-one coaching and mentoring.

"The initiative is excellent. The timing is perfect as organizations are 'tightening their belts' because funding is becoming more scarce. As organizations, we need to ensure that every dollar we receive in funding is impactful and we are doing the work that the community required from us."

Anonymous volunteer centre and E&I program participant



ENHANCED CAPACITY ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM (ECAP)

ECAP funding from the Government of Alberta helps us build our internal capacity, and in turn, we help build the capacity of other nonprofits. Internally, we developed new funding streams, an evaluation framework, a new strategic plan and the infrastructure to work remotely. It also facilitated our ability to support the nonprofit/voluntary sector by collaborating across sectors, leading and participating at decision-making tables and networks, and offering programs and services to meet sector needs.

PARTNERSHIPS AND LEARNING EVENTS

Our learning events span multiple programs and interest areas for the voluntary community. In 2020, we delivered 68 webinars and engagement sessions to roughly 600 participants. These sessions ranged from content-driven webinars

on topics like volunteer screening and evaluation to engagement sessions focused on peer-to-peer learning about youth engagement and governance. We also worked with community partners such as the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations and the Association Canadienne Française de l'Alberta to generate content in French-language and podcast formats.

SOCIAL INNOVATION

With support from the Suncor Energy Foundation, we launched our online Sector Resource Toolkit in June 2020. This collection of resources supports organizations in demonstrating their value and impact in the community and their programs, conducting evaluation, engaging volunteers, and learning from their peers. The toolkit also serves as a Member Benefit for our members.

FINANCES



- Programs/Services/Resources
\$1,155,746
- Management/Admin
\$288,937



- Contracts, grants & contribution
\$1,372,400
- Membership, workshops & donations
\$75,493
- Interest
\$1,777

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 30 YEARS

Despite the challenges we faced in 2020, the Board of Directors is looking forward with hope and optimism for our future. In 2020, we focused on charting a course for the coming years and, indeed, Volunteer Alberta's next 30 years.

We are excited about and inspired by our new three-year strategic plan for 2021-23. We engaged dozens of members and stakeholders, whose work contributes to building vibrant and connected communities in Alberta, in dialogue to get diverse perspectives on what is essential for our future. Informed by what we heard, our strategic plan identifies three roles for Volunteer Alberta to play: connector, champion and catalyst.

Over the coming years, we will focus on the future of volunteerism and civic engagement, strengthening nonprofits' and communities' capacity to innovate and adapt to our changing world. We will also authentically engage diverse voices and perspectives to foster inclusivity.

There's no doubt that the future of volunteerism in our province will look different than before. We anticipate changes in how people engage with one another to build strong, vibrant, civic-minded communities. We invite you to join us in our efforts to build flourishing communities across Alberta!

Morgan Bamford

Morgan Bamford, Board President



BOARD MEMBERS 2020/2021

Morgan Bamford, President
Hero Laird, Vice President
Naomi Mahaffy, Secretary
Sian Anderson, Treasurer
Bonnie Chiu, Director
Lesley MacKinnon, Director
Lisa Gilchrist, Director
Pieter de Vos, Director
Renita Bartlett, Director

CURRENT STAFF ROSTER

OPERATIONS & FINANCE

Karen Link, Executive Director
Cindy Walter, Operations Director
Brooke Matter, Finance Director
James Dang, Operations Manager

NETWORKS & ENGAGEMENT

Daniela Seiferling, Networks Senior Coordinator

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

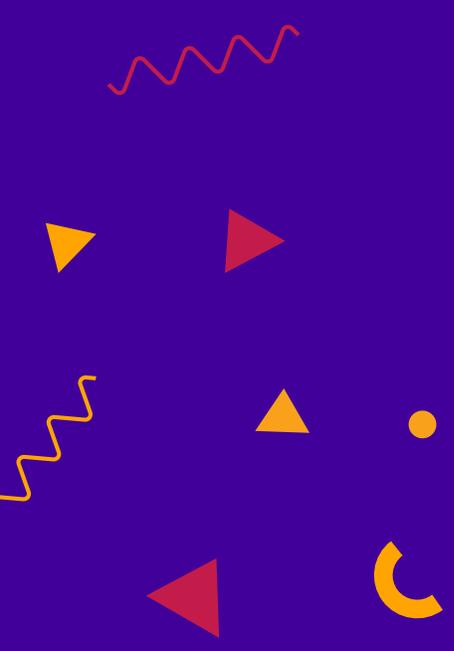
Graeme Dearden, Programs Senior Coordinator
Victoria Peta, Programs Coordinator
Bella Asiri, Evaluation & Impact Senior
Coordinator (on leave)
Naomi Harris, Evaluation & Impact
Senior Coordinator

YOUTH @ THE TABLE

Eunice Daroni, Youth Engagement Manager
Melody Santiago, Youth Engagement
Senior Coordinator
Darryl De Dios, Youth Engagement Coordinator

COMMUNICATIONS

Adrienne Vansevenandt,
Communications Senior Coordinator



THE ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTEER CENTRES AND VOLUNTEER ENGAGING ORGANIZATIONS OF ALBERTA

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