

# REMOVING BARRIERS FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

LAIDLAW FOUNDATION  
ANNUAL REPORT 2021

**LAIDLAW**  
FOUNDATION



# OUR MISSION

Laidlaw Foundation supports young people impacted by the justice, education, and child welfare systems to become healthy and engaged by investing in innovative ideas, convening interested parties, advocating for systems change, and sharing learning across the sector.

# OUR VISION

A society in which all young people have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

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# STAFF

Jehad Aliweawi  
Executive Director

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Administrative and  
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Tamer Ibrahim  
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Amanda Bernard  
IYCF  
Program Manager

Aldeli Albán Reyna  
Program Manager

Diana Demjanenko  
Operations  
Coordinator

Musa Alturk  
Finance  
Coordinator

During the year, Orville Wallace, Veanna Octive, and Saeed Selvam left the Foundation to pursue other opportunities. We are grateful for their dedication and leadership during their time with the Foundation and wish them all the best. Thank you, Orville, Veanna, and Saeed.

Foundation House's  
shared employees:

Ruth Cortez  
Receptionist and  
Office Assistant

Precious Ogadi  
IT and Data Coordinator

# COMMITTEES & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rebecca Darwent	Setareh (Tara) Farahani
Sandra Kagango	Cameron Laidlaw
Julia Laidlaw	Andre Lewis
Janine Manning	Paul Nagpal
Bridget Sinclair	Bob Smith
Lyon Smith	May Wong

## OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**President:** Janine Manning  
**Vice President:** Rebecca Darwent  
**Chair of Finance and Audit Committee:** Andre Lewis  
**Chair of Granting Committee:** Setareh (Tara) Farahani  
**Secretary:** Jehad Aliweawi

## FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Andre Lewis, Chair  
 Sandra Kagango, Vice Chair  
 Paul Nagpal  
 Bob Smith

## EXTERNAL ADVISORS

Heather Brubacher  
 Tiffany Chang  
 Ken Gibson  
 Sumant Inamdar

## INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

Paul Nagpal, Chair  
 Andre Lewis, Vice Chair  
 Sandra Kagango      May Wong

## EXTERNAL ADVISORS

Paul Fensom      Heather Hunter  
 Kristina Inrig      Hanifa Kassam  
 Randy Steuart      Ewa Townsend

## IMPACT INVESTMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Paul Nagpal, Chair

## EXTERNAL ADVISORS

Lars Boggild      Paul Fensom  
 Kristina Inrig      Hanifa Kassam  
 MJ Sinha

## GRANTING COMMITTEE

Setareh (Tara) Farahani, Chair  
 Lyon Smith, Vice Chair

Cameron Laidlaw      Andre Lewis  
 Sandra Kagango      May Wong

## EXTERNAL ADVISORS

Irwin Elman      Koubra Haggar  
 Teddy Syrette      Paul Bailey

## GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Rebecca Darwent, Chair  
 Bridget Sinclair, Vice Chair  
 Setareh (Tara) Farahani      Cameron Laidlaw  
 Julia Laidlaw      Andre Lewis

## EXTERNAL ADVISORS

Hanifa Kassam

## FAMILY COMMITTEE

Cameron Laidlaw, Chair  
 Julia Laidlaw, Vice Chair  
 Bob Smith      Lyon Smith

## NON-FAMILY BOARD MEMBERS:

Rebecca Darwent      May Wong

## EXTERNAL ADVISORS

Tim Apgar      Jessica Hammell  
 Caitlin Laidlaw      Jamie Laidlaw  
 Kathryn Simmers      Nicole Denoudan  
 Melissa Laidlaw

## INDIGENOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Jessica Bolduc      Jerica Fraser  
 Erin Hayward      Sarah Nelson  
 Jacob Parcher      Lacey Biedermann  
 Lance Copegog      T'áncháy Redvers

# MESSAGE

## FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### A journey toward trust-based philanthropy

**T**he year 2021 was eventful for the world and for the Laidlaw Foundation as well. It was year two of lockdowns, remote work, and continued uncertainty. Despite these circumstances, the Foundation maintained its focus on supporting community-based and youth-led initiatives that challenge systemic barriers in the justice, education, and child welfare systems while confronting unequal access to services and resources.

In the past year, Bob Smith completed his three-year term as president of the Foundation. During his tenure, Laidlaw marked three significant milestones: celebrating the Foundation's 70th anniversary, adopting a bold five-year strategic plan, and transferring capital to the Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund and the Foundation for Black Communities, two pioneering Indigenous-led and Black-led philanthropic initiatives. We invite you to read Bob's thoughts on his time as president on page 8.

This was also the year Laidlaw made history by becoming the first private family foundation in Canada to appoint an Indigenous woman as president of the board and a Black woman as Vice President. President Janine Manning and Vice President Rebecca Darwent will lead the Foundation in its expressed desire to centre equity in our work and

address the lack of representation and diversity in governance, both on our Board and across the sector.

While we are proud to be first, we actively encourage others to join us in this power shift. Our focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and reconciliation is not an aspiration; rather, it is a state of being manifested through the entire organization and rooted in justice and accountability. For centuries, philanthropy has served the status quo, without being fundamentally challenged. The ongoing pandemic sparked long-overdue conversations about the lack of diversity amongst the leaders, staff, and advisors of private family foundations.

In 2021, we demonstrated our commitment to addressing inequities in granting by formalizing the

Special COVID-19 Relief Fund into the Community Equity and Solidarity Fund. It is our intention to decolonize wealth and address longstanding disparities in grant-making, and we challenge our peers to do the same.

We cannot meaningfully address social issues without reflecting on who is receiving our grants and who is not. The sector is being distracted by numbers and spending percentage at the expense of needs and capital equity.

We see an opportunity to confront inequity in grant-making and philanthropy. The possibilities for creative, flexible, and responsive investments are limitless. Working with grassroots, community- and youth-led, and often unincorporated entities is an immediate option for foundations who wish to be efficient, impactful, and relevant capital allocators.

Our granting portfolio continues to reflect the Laidlaw Foundation's effort to build the capacity of, engage with, and advocate for youth in Ontario who are impacted by the criminal justice, education, and child welfare systems. To that effect, we provided funding to several initiatives from across the province, including all those profiled in this report.

One of the year's highlights was the release of Cash Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper. The report examined in depth how the dispossession of Indigenous lands nearly destroyed Indigenous economic livelihoods. In partnering with institutions like Toronto Metropolitan University on projects like this one, we remain relevant to, and knowledgeable about, the wellbeing of youth. We are grateful for such opportunities.

Another key moment for the Foundation was the addition of three new staff members to the team. We were delighted to welcome new program managers Amanda Bernard (leading

the Indigenous Youth and Community Futures Fund) and Aldeli Albán Reyna (leading the Youth Action Fund and PopUp Grants), as well as Diana Demjanenko, Operations and Grant Coordinator.

The accomplishments of the Foundation are due to the dedicated leadership of an engaged Board, a committed Family, and a talented staff team. Our sincere thanks to all those whose efforts and hard work made the activities covered in this document a celebrated reality. The leadership of the Laidlaw Foundation's Board and the commitment of the staff were especially appreciated during the ongoing pandemic, allowing us to be present and available for many communities.

**Thank you for reading our 2021 annual report. We look forward to hearing from you!**

Sincerely,

Janine Manning, **President**

Jehad Aliweiwi, **Executive Director**



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM A LIFETIME OF GIVING

PAST PRESIDENT BOB SMITH REFLECTS ON THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT COME FROM GIVING BACK

**T**he Laidlaw Foundation has been a presence in Bob Smith's life since his childhood. His grandfather Robert A. Laidlaw founded the organization in 1949.

**“My mother was the eldest child and only daughter of the founder,” says Bob. “When I was growing up, there was a family commitment from my parents to giving back. It was something I grew up with.”**



Bob continued that commitment with extensive volunteering, including well over 25 years with the Laidlaw Foundation as a member of the Board, the Finance and Audit Committee, and the Family Committee. He's the current past president and senior living member of the Laidlaw family. He also served with Central Neighbourhood House (now part of The Neighbourhood Group), Family Service Toronto, Canadian Camping Association, Ontario Camps Association, and Ontario Hockey Association.

## Watching the Laidlaw Foundation grow has been especially rewarding.

“The Foundation is well known, especially in recent years, to be very innovative and a leader in so many different ways,” says Bob. “I'm very proud of the family name on the door.”

Over his lifetime, there were two significant giving-back opportunities for Bob. The first was his involvement with the Foundation, which began in the early 1970s when he and two of his cousins formed what became the first Family Committee. Eventually, that led to a Board decision to have three and currently four of 12 Board positions open to members of the family.

“Family involvement always has been important to me,” says Bob. “It's great that these opportunities are being encouraged by the Board and the Family Committee.”

Moving the Foundation forward is also important to Bob, a fact that's apparent in three milestones achieved during his time as president. One milestone was the final approval of the Strategic Plan for 2019–2024, which Bob emphasizes was a joint effort over two Board terms.

“The other thing was the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Foundation with a big gala dinner in 2019,” he says. “I was so honoured to be president at the time.”

But Bob's proudest Foundation moment was the approval of the Community Equity and Solidarity Fund, which includes a commitment of \$2.5 million over five years to each of the Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund and the Foundation for Black Communities. It was a Board-driven decision.

“That was monumental to me because, once again, the Foundation was taking a leadership role,” says Bob.

It's also an example of how the Laidlaw Foundation is evolving.

“Philanthropy has to evolve,” says Bob. “Foundations such as ours have to be aware of what's going on in the community and evolve to recognize community needs.”

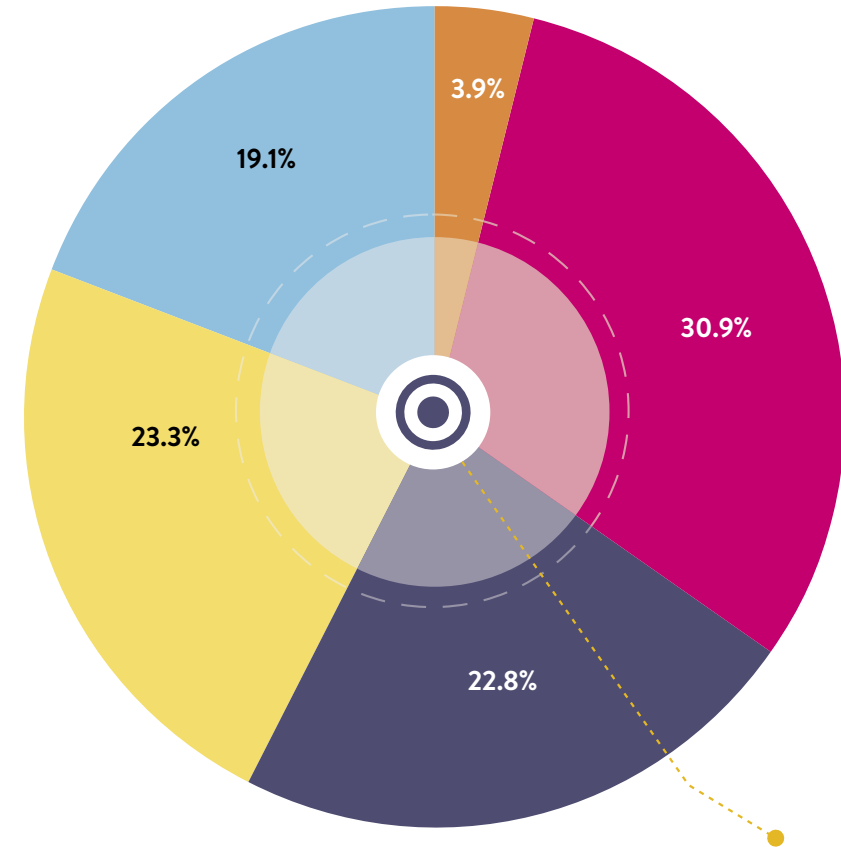
The Strategic Plan reflects that evolution and focuses on youth impacted by the education, criminal justice, and child welfare systems. The child welfare system represents that second stream of giving-back opportunities for Bob.

It started in 1961 when he joined the staff of a day camp run by Central Neighbourhood House. He then worked as the assistant leader of a club for youth in the dock district of London, England. What followed were many years of involvement with youth, particularly through Central Neighbourhood House, and the proudest and most exciting thing of all.

“I have five adopted sons who all came through the child welfare system and Children's Aid Society,” he says. “It's been incredible for me. They're all single-parent adult adoptions, which is quite unusual because although many of them were part of my family for years before the formality of adoption, they were all well into their adulthood. The three youngest are natural brothers.”

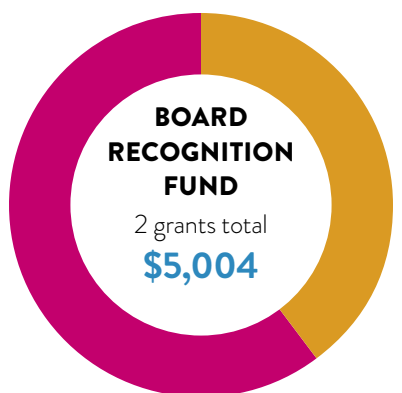
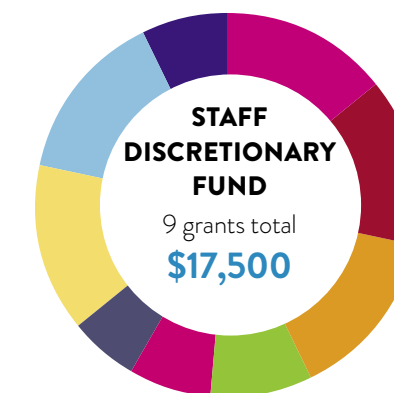
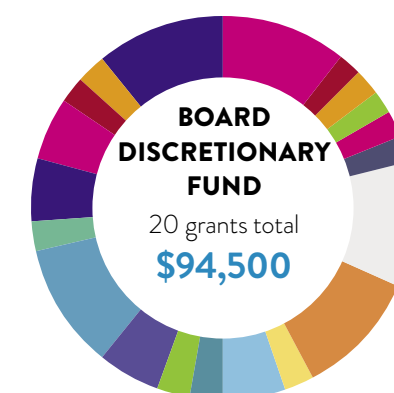
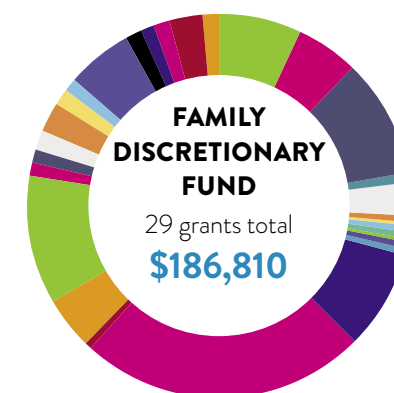
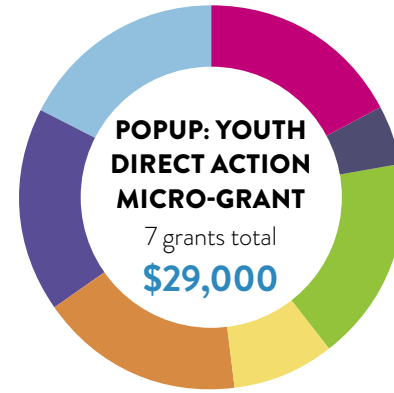
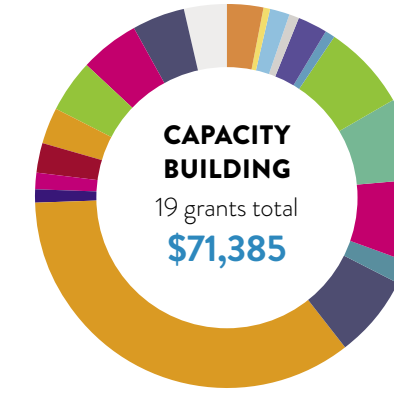
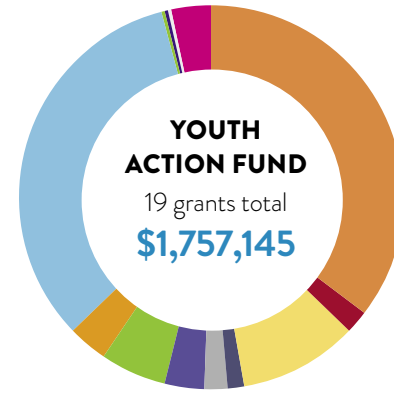
**“And that is the highlight of all the opportunities,” he says.**

# INVESTMENT & FINANCE



## ASSET MIX

- Cash and Equivalents - 3.9%
- US Equity - 23.3%
- Bonds - 30.9%
- International Equity - 19.1%
- Canadian Equity - 22.8%



# HONOURING AND STRENGTHENING YOUTH VOICES

## ENAGB HELPS INDIGENOUS YOUTH MAKE DECISIONS FOR THEMSELVES

In many cultures, there is a belief that every generation has a responsibility to make things better for the next. However, this belief often relegates young people to the sidelines to watch. Cynthia Bell-Clayton, co-founder of Eshkiniigjik Naandwechigamig — A Place for Healing Our Youth — Aabiish Gaa Binjibaaying — Where Did We Come From? (ENAGB), does the opposite.

“Youth are the inheritors of what we leave behind,” says Cynthia. “So why wouldn’t you get them involved in what is being done today?”

ENAGB is a youth-led Indigenous agency based in Toronto. The agency, which has four locations, provides youth ages 12–29 and families with children ages 0–6 with opportunities in key areas such as culture, employment, and holistic wellness. The Youth Council is a central component of ENAGB. It was created to involve youth up to age 29 in decision-making processes.

Programs include land-based learning and cultural programming (e.g., beading, drum making, and ceremonies). Other supports include access to drop-in space and a community kitchen. The goal is to prepare Indigenous young people across North America to contribute positively to their communities.

That goal carries significant meaning. When Cynthia was a youth living on the Manitoulin Island (Wiikwemkoong) reserve almost 25 years ago, she participated in an intergenerational community conversation about a fellow youth who passed away by suicide. When she tried to speak up, she was shut down. Later, when she tried to advocate for youth as an adult working at a community organization, she was dismissed without cause.

But when she crossed paths with a Laidlaw Foundation Board member, she found a path

that honoured youth voices: the building of ENAGB. Through the Community Equity and Solidarity Fund, Laidlaw Foundation has provided \$174,600 to cover the cost of renting space for one of ENAGB’s locations until 2023.

ENAGB programs foster relationships between youth and adults that are built on trust and respect — and this requires staff to be active participants.

“Sometimes institutions say, ‘you’re working only if you’re doing paperwork,’” Cynthia says, “but it is also essential to participate in their programming, such as playing volleyball with them or setting up a baseball game. Doing this develops trusting relationships with the youth — a very important component that informs our work.”

Unfortunately, the pandemic has posed many challenges. The ENAGB space at 1005 Woodbine Avenue was open inconsistently due to changing provincial and municipal guidelines. Furthermore, those with mental health and addiction issues have been completely isolated and have had less access to resources.

While Cynthia and the ENAGB team have found success online via Facebook — they’ve reached 1,023 youth and families with children ages 0–6 since September 2020 — they have also found that many Indigenous people, themselves included, are experiencing mounting losses, such as the discovery of unmarked graves at residential schools.

Although the journey has been challenging, the triumph has been in the leadership of young people and the space that their elders, including Cynthia, continue to make with them.

“A lot of people want the youth to sit back and listen when they’re supposed to be the ones to decide what’s best for themselves,” she says. “We believe here at ENAGB that youth are the PhD and master’s degree holders in their own healing journeys.”



# INDIGENOUS YOUTH AND COMMUNITY FUTURES FUND \$600,000

Through the Indigenous Youth and Community Futures Fund (IYCFF), Laidlaw invests in opportunities for Indigenous youth to develop and lead projects where they are immersed in their lands, languages and cultures; participate in everyday acts of resurgence, reclamation and wellbeing; build relationships within and across Indigenous communities; and learn about and define for themselves what reconciliation means.



INDIGENOUS YOUTH AND COMMUNITY FUTURES FUND - \$600,000	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte	\$30,000
Temagami First Nation	\$30,000
Endaayaan Awejaa	\$30,000
Curve Lake Wasa-nabin	\$30,000

INDIGENOUS YOUTH AND COMMUNITY FUTURES FUND - \$600,000	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve	\$30,000
Wasauksing Restorative Justice (Maryjoyce Clayden-Tabobondung)	\$30,000
Indige-Spheres to Empowerment	\$30,000
Redbird Adventures (Winona Ominika)	\$30,000
River Rocks (Children's Peace Theatre)	\$30,000
Bagida'waad Alliance Inc.	\$30,000
Gnaaj-wiinge Youth Group (Dr. Deborah McGregor)	\$30,000
Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre (Inuuqatigiit Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families)	\$30,000
Youth Odena (Waabinong Head Start Family Resource Centre)	\$30,000
Story Up (Khanena Lee Nowegejick)	\$30,000
Assembly of Seven Generations	\$30,000
Treaty #3 Oshkiniigiig Youth Executive Council (GCT#3 Representative Services)	\$30,000
Aaodsokawin Mtigwaaking	\$30,000
Biizidun (Casha Adams)	\$30,000
Revitalizing Our Sustenance (Denise Miller)	\$30,000
SchoolBOX Inc.	\$30,000



# WALKING IN UNITY

## AT ENDAAYAAN AWEJAA, INDIGENOUS YOUTH FIND THE SUPPORT AND CULTURE THEY NEED TO BUILD SOLID FUTURES

When Natasha Lariviere was in high school, she lost several friends and loved ones to suicide and substance use. Luckily, she had support at her school. “When I was struggling as a youth with my grief, they were really there for me, and they actually helped me become the helper I am today,” she says.

That’s also how she connected with her culture.

“Emski Misgokwe ndizhnikaaz. Nbsiing ndoonjibaa. Waawaashkesh ndoodem. My name is Strong Earth Woman, also known as Natasha Lariviere. I am from Nipissing First Nation. I am part of the deer clan. I’m a mother of three. I’m a wife. I’m a student. I’m 29. I’m taking my Bachelor of Indigenous Social Work at Laurentian University, and I have my Diploma in Social Service Work.”

As the founder and chief executive officer of Endaayaan Awejaa, Natasha is also a leader.

Endaayaan Awejaa is dedicated to providing youth and families with safe places to heal and build solid foundations for their futures. Natasha started the organization in July 2020 in memory of the friends and loved ones she lost. The mission statement is Maamwi Bmosedaa — walking in unity.

“We strive to walk in unity with the youth and families we work with,” she says. “We want to provide youth with support and tools to be strong leaders for our future generations.”

Endaayaan Awejaa provides programming within the Nipissing First Nation and surrounding areas and builds community capacity amongst youth, community members, and elders. Youth support includes care packages, medicine bundles, and ongoing workshops on life skills, ceremony, and culture teachings. The response from youth is encouraging.

“They’ve been enjoying our workshops and the supports,” says Natasha. “We’ve created a safe place for them to really open up and reconnect.”

Like Natasha, many of the youth didn’t grow up in the culture.

“Many of them struggle with mental health, and we work with youth who are also in recovery, so having those teachings has helped them grow a lot,” she says. “When they get teachings, you can see the spark in them. You can see the change happening. It’s amazing.”

The biggest highlight for Natasha has been creating their youth wellness council.

“I’m really proud of them,” says Natasha. “They are the guiding force of our organization right now. They give ongoing input for what programs or workshops and services that they’d like to see in the community. We really wanted to give the youth a chance to use their voice and make them feel like they have a say.”

While the pandemic cancelled some ceremonies, there has been a positive consequence for Endaayaan Awejaa: their online following grew, as more people can attend online than are able to attend in person. Then, in December 2021, Endaayaan Awejaa moved from being a mobile operation based out of Natasha’s living room into its own space in downtown North Bay. The next goal is a youth home for high school students that offers culture teachings, counselling, mentorship, workshops, and activities.

“A lot of youth relocate to our area for education, and there’s not a lot of funding out there specifically for a living allowance for high school students,” she says. “That youth stage is a very important stage. Youth are trying to figure out who they are, and there’s already a lot of stress going on with that, then they have to worry about where they are going to live. Having these programs in a residential setting would be very beneficial.”

A youth home would also be the realization of a business plan Natasha created in high school.

“We want to provide a safe space for our youth to live, and heal, and grow, and start building that solid foundation for their future.”



# YOUTH ACTION FUND

## \$1,757,145

The Youth Action Fund offers grants to grassroots initiatives working with youth who are under-served by the education system and overrepresented in the justice and child welfare systems. YAF prioritizes Black and Indigenous youth-led initiatives. The development of this fund was guided by a series of consultations with experts and advocates in the field.

### Objectives:

- Elevate the voices of young people with lived experiences in the justice, education, and child welfare systems
- Support initiatives working on or advocating for early intervention
- Promote equitable and accountable institutions and systems
- Support initiatives working on or advocating for evidence-based policy
- Support initiatives that are informed by youth, families and communities

YOUTH ACTION FUND - \$1,757,145	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Finding Our Power Together	\$100,000
Justice Fund Toronto	\$100,000
Stolen From Africa / Volé D'Afrique	\$100,000
Child Welfare PAC Canada	\$98,000
Urban Alliance on Race Relations	\$100,000
Tamil Canadian Centre for Civic Action	\$25,000
Feathers Of Hope	\$100,000
Kids with Incarcerated Parents (KIP) (formerly FEAT for Children)	\$59,137
MusicLinks Community Canada (Previous mentor: SKETCH Working Arts)	\$98,448
Children's Peace Theatre (Freedom School)	\$100,000
Turning Point Youth Services	\$100,000
HairStory: ROOTED	\$100,000
Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples	\$81,310
Success Beyond Limits	\$100,000

YOUTH ACTION FUND - \$1,757,145	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Amadeusz	\$100,000
Youth Association for Academics, Athletics, and Character Education (YAAACE)	\$100,000
Trust 15 Youth Community Support Organization	\$100,000

**NOTE:** \$25,000 was paid to OCAC in December 2021, but in Jan 2022, the group reached out to cancel the contract and give back the funds due to changes in leadership.

YOUTH ACTION FUND - \$1,757,145	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
The Remix Project (FYOU: Forgiveness Project)	\$100,000
Youth Taking Flight	\$100,000



# #MOVETHEMONEY

## JUSTICE FUND IS REFORMING PHILANTHROPY TO END THE CYCLE OF CHARITY AND DEPENDENCY

**Y**onis Hassan is determined to work his way out of a job — literally. Yonis is CEO and co-founder of Justice Fund, a non-profit dedicated to supporting communities in conflict with the law through three strategic priorities: supporting community-led initiatives, reforming philanthropy, and creating community infrastructure.

“At our core, we are an anti-violence organization,” says Yonis. “And we believe the best way to address violence is by making bold investments in the social determinants of health.”

Yonis and co-founders Jermyn Creed and Noah “40” Shebib formally launched Justice Fund in 2021. Their first year-end recap was impressive: over \$1 million in charitable assets to Toronto communities, including 335 care packages; over 2,000 hours of online education, and outdoor and experiential community programming; and \$500,000 of unrestricted, trust-based philanthropic funding and additional wraparound services.\*

All told, Justice Fund assisted more than 10,000 individuals in 2021 — and it’s the kind of assistance that changes lives. Consider their skills and workforce development training.

“We were taking kids who were recently released through the criminal justice system and providing them access to economic mobility,” says Yonis. “We don’t believe in charity; we believe in justice.”

They also believe in philanthropic reform — significant reform.

“I am a recovering fundraiser in the not-for-profit sector,” says Yonis. “That means I have a pretty good understanding of how philanthropy works in this country, who benefits from philanthropy, who has access to philanthropic resources, who has access to social capital, campaign cabinets, advisory committees. The reality is a tremendous power imbalance.”

The root of the imbalance is historic and cultural.

“Every time I say ‘philanthropy,’ I’m talking about settler philanthropy,” he says. “Canadians need to understand that Canadian philanthropy is rooted in exploitation, extraction, and genocide of Indigenous populations. The barriers that exist are rooted in colonialism, and the fact that we allow ourselves within the charitable sector to be governed by laws that go back to colonialism is irresponsible of us collectively.”

Real change requires the Federal Government to implement trust-based philanthropy. The priority has to be allowing communities and organizations to solve their own issues while providing pathways to financial sustainability. In other words, we must #MoveTheMoney so organizations get the big grants — the million-dollar grants — needed to end the cycle of charity and dependency.

The timing for reform is critical.

“Prior to the pandemic, it was evident Canadian philanthropy really did not care about Black and Indigenous communities,” says Hassan. “We had a moment of philanthropic consciousness during the pandemic, that Black and Indigenous communities were suffering, but I think that has come and gone, and I’m deeply concerned about apathy and social-justice fatigue emerging within the philanthropic sector.”

Maintaining momentum means continuously engaging with organizations in need of resources and ensuring everyone understands there is money in the sector.

“Our objective is not to try to convince foundations or philanthropists to change and implement our six pillars of philanthropic reform,” he says. “Our objective is, one, to work with government to understand that this needs to be an increased priority; then two, work with the 86,000 charities across this country and let them know that this power imbalance exists and our apathy towards philanthropy is not serving our objectives.”

Yonis recognizes it’s a bold plan: “We have to be ambitious. We have to shoot for the moon and land amongst stars. We have to be bold.”

Because his goal to work himself out of a job is real.

“I am so desperate to work myself out of a job. If I’m here 10 years from now, and we have another conversation where we’re speaking about the disgusting amount of resources the philanthropic sector has and the level of violence that exists in our city, I have fundamentally failed.”

\* *Globe Newswire*, “Noah ‘40’ Shebib, Drake, and Justice Fund Announce End-of-Year Recap in Support of Toronto Nonprofits,” December 23, 2021.

<https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2021/12/23/2357434/0/en/Noah-40-Shebib-Drake-and-Justice-Fund-Announce-End-of-Year-Recap-in-Support-of-Toronto-Nonprofits.html>



# CAPACITY BUILDING

## \$71,385

Capacity Building provides professional development to Youth Action Fund recipients.

CAPACITY BUILDING - \$71,385	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Near North Mobile Media Lab	\$372.90
The Remix Project (FYOU: Forgiveness Project)	\$1,287
Near North Mobile Media Lab	\$564
Pramila Javaheri	\$1,745
Pramila Javaheri	\$700

CAPACITY BUILDING - \$71,385	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Feathers Of Hope	\$4,999.97
Two White Feather Red Road Bike Rides (Lori K Lafond) *PopUp Grant	\$5,000
Health Out Loud *PopUp Grant	\$5,000
Amadeusz	\$1,342
Lookup Theatre *PopUp Grant	\$5,000
Positive Change Toronto	\$25,000
Governing Council of the University of Toronto (Youth Wellness Lab)	\$850
Near North Mobile Media Lab	\$894.82
Governing Council of the University of Toronto (Youth Wellness Lab)	\$1,870
The Remix Project (FYOU: Forgiveness Project)	\$2,200
Youth Taking Flight	\$3,000
MusicLinks Community Canada (JustOverMusic: Music Links Project)	\$3,600
Boys & Girls Clubs of East Scarborough (IMPACT n' Communities)	\$3,250
HairStory: ROOTED	\$2,451.21

# YOUTH COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Laidlaw is proud of its partners and advocates pushing for real change so that the systems intended to benefit young people actually do. Now in its seventh year, the Youth Collective Impact (Youth CI) program continues to support collaboratives across Ontario that are looking to turn their ideas into collective impact initiatives. Sometimes, these ideas are in a state of early development and require Youth CI's key capacity-building resources, like workshops, coaching, and funding, to become quality, implementable initiatives. This year, thanks to our partners Innoweave, the Government of Ontario, and our incredible coaches, Youth CI supported 22 collectives in 21 regions across Ontario tackling systemic issues in education, mental health, justice, food security, and housing. These collectives serve and support Black and Indigenous youth, as well as young people of colour.

As a framework, collective impact takes considerable time and effort to design. Expanding partnerships and stepping up community engagement require patience. In addition, collectives across Ontario are still dealing with the pressures of COVID-19. Despite these circumstances, Youth CI grantees continue to take action in strategic and sustainable ways.

It's no surprise that Youth CI partners are being recognized by the extended community for their incredible work. In 2021, that recognition included the following:

- Swabir Shariff (Youth CI Youth Leadership Training '21) was awarded Charity Village's Best Individual Contribution to Youth Engagement Award for his work in building opportunities for young people through his organization, The Good Guides.
- The York Region Youth Homelessness Prevention and Housing Stabilization Strategy was recognized for its outstanding initiative, receiving the first annual Making the Shift Youth Homelessness Prevention Awards in the collaboration category. The awards are co-led by A Way Home Canada and the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, and recognize the strength of coalitions that accelerate approaches to youth homelessness prevention.
- Laidlaw Foundation received the Foundation Supporter Award from Strong Minds Strong Kids, Psychology Canada (SMSKPC). This award recognized Youth CI's support of the Mawachi Hitowin Project for Children and Youth, which supports Indigenous youth in the five communities of the Mushkegowuk Region of Northern Ontario. The Foundation Supporter Award was announced at SMSKPC's 17th Annual Breakfast of Champions, and recognizes a company's or foundation's philanthropy and support for the development of programs and resources that raise awareness of mental health issues.

With all this recognition and the many milestones our partners are striving to reach, Youth CI is more eager than ever to continue facilitating collective action and impact.

# YOUTH COLLECTIVE IMPACT \$902,404

\*Youth CI: April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021 Grant Total: \$649,740

YOUTH COLLECTIVE IMPACT - \$902,404	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
<b>CONVERSATION STARTER GRANT</b>	
The Art of Life Community Health Centre	\$1,000
InspireHER Niagara	\$1,000
Ontario Deaf Youth Collective	\$1,000
Afghan Youth Engagement & Development Initiative	\$1,000
BAM Books Art Music Collective	\$1,000
<b>EXPLORATION GRANT (WITH DEVELOPMENT COACHING)</b>	
Youth Justice Transformation Lab	\$10,000
Coalition for Alternatives for Streaming in Education	\$10,000
Future Readiness Initiative	\$10,000
Ontario Deaf Youth Collective	\$15,000
South Scarborough Youth Action Group (SSYAG)	\$10,000
<b>EXECUTION GRANT</b>	
Black Youth School Success Initiative	\$150,000
KFL&A Youth Employment Support Collective	\$20,000
Caledon Youth Voice	\$100,000
Mawachi Hitowin Project for Children and Youth	\$30,000
Halton Granters Roundtable	\$27,000

YOUTH COLLECTIVE IMPACT - \$902,404	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
<b>LAUNCH GRANT</b>	
Jane Finch Bridging Education to Employment	\$60,000
Education CI	\$60,000
Rural Ottawa Youth Mental Health Collective	\$60,000
<b>YOUTH LEADERSHIP &amp; TRAINING</b>	
Mobeen Lalani	\$2,000
Swabir Shariff	\$2,000

YOUTH COLLECTIVE IMPACT - \$902,404	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
<b>LAUNCH GRANT (WITH PLANNING COACHING)</b>	
The Life Dojo	\$13,000
Jane and Finch Collective for Youth Employment	\$13,000
Empowering Parents, Caregivers, and Allies as Catalysts for Positive Youth Mental Health	\$13,000
Rexdale Food Justice Collaborative	\$13,000
Northern Lights Collaborative	\$13,740
The York Region Collaborative to Reduce Youth Homelessness	\$13,000



# THE ONTARIO DEAF YOUTH COLLECTIVE IS BORN

## YOUTH CI HELPS A NEW COLLECTIVE ADDRESS GAPS IN SERVICES

**T**he Ontario Deaf Youth Collective is driven by an important vision: an Ontario where Deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) youth ages 13–30 are empowered and supported to succeed and thrive. In April 2021, six organizations, including Silent Voice, Deaf Youth Canada, and Sign Language Institute Canada, came together for their first Youth CI workshop, where they began designing the framework for their collective impact initiative.

“There are a lot of gaps in services for Deaf and hard of hearing youth,” says Michelle Chung. “Bringing other organizations together was essential for us to start something.” Michelle is the treasurer at Deaf Youth Canada, an organization that promotes the unification of Deaf youth by organizing and stimulating the exchange of information and experiences among them. This organization brought the collective together.

“Deaf Youth Canada didn’t have the capacity to lead a collective impact initiative,” says Michelle. “So we brought on Kelly MacKenzie (Silent Voice) and tapped other organizations on their shoulders to see what the interest was like.”

That interest gave birth to the Ontario Deaf Youth Collective. Now, they’re designing a robust theory of change using Youth CI resources, such as Development Coaching and an Exploration Grant.

“We often work in silos,” says Rose Etheridge, Director of Resource Development Services at Silent Voice. “We don’t realize that working together makes the resources stronger and greater.” Rose is currently leading a group of young people to collect data on the gaps for DHH youth. According to the collective, 95% of DHH youth are

born into hearing families. These young people often experience isolation and a lack of access to language acquisition, education, and career development.

To maintain community connection and support young people’s passions and talents, the collective began designing a concept called the HUB, a resource that will leverage existing programs and services in one place for DHH youth, their families, and partnering organizations.

“We know the Deaf community knows there are gaps,” says Rose. “We want something to fill those gaps. This was an opportunity to lift youth up in some way, and the HUB cannot happen with just one organization.”

The collective is using various methods, with guidance from their Youth CI coach, Brittney Patton, to advance their joint vision. Members at the table have found the process validating, and although it is hard to see the gaps in the system, they are inspired to see themselves getting closer to action and to building the HUB.

“I’ve been singing the praises of the Youth CI program because, when we did the theory of change, we knew we weren’t going to see success in 12 months,” says Kelly MacKenzie, Executive Director of Silent Voice. “We’re going to see it in five years. The Youth CI process is realistic.”

In the coming months, the Ontario Deaf Youth Collective hopes to increase the diversity of voices at the table. Already, 87% of the collective’s members are DHH individuals, with 50% being DHH youth. The collective hopes to engage Indigenous Deaf youth, LGBTQIA2S+ youth, Black youth, and young people of colour in their collective discussions and decision-making.



# POPUP

## YOUTH DIRECT ACTION MICRO-GRANT

# \$29,000

Across Ontario, young people are addressing the trauma of racial inequity in their communities, schools and workplaces. Youth are confronting systemic racism in an effort to remove barriers in the institutions they navigate and the resources they access. Among the challenges imposed by COVID-19, there is emerging evidence of racial disparities in accessing culturally relevant mental health support for Black communities, Indigenous communities, and people of colour.

The Laidlaw Foundation offered PopUp grants up to \$5,000 to support projects and events created by young people that address the links between racial equity and youth mental health.

POPUP: YOUTH DIRECT ACTION MICRO-GRANT - \$29,000	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Helping Hands Platform	\$5,000
YouSpoken (Thivya Jeyapalan)	\$1,500
Spacial Spice (Samantha Kristy Siewdass)	\$5,000
The Studios Project	\$2,500
Youth Visionaries (Gurneet Dhani)	\$5,000
The Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration	\$5,000
Stay Golden (Henrick Sales)	\$5,000

COMMUNITY EQUITY AND SOLIDARITY FUND - \$1,108,200	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Calgary Foundation - Foundation for Black Communities	\$500,000
ENAGB Indigenous Youth Agency	\$58,200
Anishnawbe Health Foundation	\$50,000
Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund (Community Foundations Canada)	\$500,000

# COMMUNITY

## EQUITY & SOLIDARITY FUND

# \$1,108,200

# STAFF

## DISCRETIONARY FUND

# \$17,500

STAFF DISCRETIONARY FUND - \$17,500	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Project iRISE (Delta Family Resource Centre)	\$2,500
Project iRISE (Delta Family Resource Centre)	\$2,500
Project iRISE (Delta Family Resource Centre)	\$2,500
Justice Fund Toronto	\$1,500
Maggie's Toronto	\$1,250
Youth Ottawa	\$1,000
Indian Residential School Survivors Society (IRSSS)	\$2,500
Regional Multicultural Youth Council	\$2,500
The 519 (trustee for PODER)	\$1,250



# FAMILY DISCRETIONARY FUND

## \$186,810

FAMILY DISCRETIONARY FUND - \$186,810	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society	\$13,000
Family Counselling and Support Services for Guelph-Wellington	\$10,000
Lionhearts	\$18,000
Kids in Camp	\$2,000
Woodland Cultural Centre	\$5,000
St. James Cathedral	\$1,000
Christ Churches Roches Point	\$250
Parish of Georgina	\$1,000
Christ Church Roches Point	\$1,000
St. George's Church, Parish of Georgina	\$1,000
The Couchiching Conservancy	\$1,000
The Corporation of Massey Hall and Roy Thomson Hall	\$1,000

FAMILY DISCRETIONARY FUND - \$186,810	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
The Glenn Gould School (The Royal Conservatory of Music)	\$15,000
Brigs Youth Sail Training	\$45,000
Salal Foundation	\$1,000
The Canadian International Council	\$8,000
Community Foundation Grey Bruce	\$20,000
The Smile Company	\$2,000
Georgina Community Food Pantry	\$2,000
The Meeting Place Tobermory	\$3,000
Christ Church Anglican, Roches Point	\$5,000
Chez Doris	\$2,500
Ontario Water Centre (The Clearwater Farm)	\$2,000
Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion	\$10,000
Covenant House Toronto	\$2,750
Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation	\$2,000
Old Brewery Mission	\$2,500
United Way of Greater Toronto	\$5,000
Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion	\$2,500

# BOARD DISCRETIONARY FUND

## \$94,500

FORMER BOARD MEMBERS RECOGNITION FUND - \$5,004	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Ontario Arts Foundation	\$2,000
Project Canoe	\$3,004

BOARD DISCRETIONARY FUND - \$94,500	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
ENAGB Indigenous Youth Agency	\$10,000
Art Canada Institute	\$2,000
Green Foundation Canada	\$2,000
Oneness World Communication	\$2,000
Christie Lake Kids	\$2,000
The Ontario Historical Society	\$2,000

BOARD DISCRETIONARY FUND - \$94,500	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Project Canoe	\$10,000
Toronto Foundation	\$10,000
Michael Gordon Hospital Foundation (Toronto East Health Network Foundation)	\$2,500
Brigs Youth Sail Training	\$5,000
Lumenus Foundation	\$2,500
Woodland Cultural Centre	\$2,500
Indian Residential School Survivors Society (IRSSS)	\$5,000
Sickle Cell Ontario	\$10,000
Assembly of Seven Generations	\$2,500
The Governing Council of the University of Toronto	\$5,000
SickKids Foundation	\$5,000
True North Aid	\$2,000
Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion	\$2,500
Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition	\$10,000



# A NEW GENERATION OF RED PAPERS

## COMMUNITY-BUILDING PROCESSES SHAPE THE WORK OF YELLOWHEAD INSTITUTE

**I**n community work, the process is just as important as the outcome. Process determines how relationships are built and maintained, and good processes include and collaborate with different voices and perspectives from the very beginning.

Such is the case at Yellowhead Institute (Yellowhead), a First Nation-led research centre based at Toronto Metropolitan University. The Institute produces community-facing research and offers critical education on urgent issues in Indigenous communities. Their partnership with Laidlaw Foundation began in 2018.

One of the Institute's major projects has been a series of original multi-faceted research reports called the Red Papers. This title is a nod to the Chiefs of the Indian Association of Alberta, who created the first Red Paper in 1970 in response to a statement from the Government of Canada in 1969, known as the White Paper, which proposed political and legal assimilation of Indigenous communities.

Eva Jewell, Research Director of Yellowhead, is continuing the legacy of that document and its authors. Eva and her team participated in a series of community workshops to discuss several topics for Cash Back, the second published Red Paper. Topics included sources of poverty, First Nation-Crown financial relations, and the importance of Indigenous economies.

"[Cash Back] is kind of a natural second step to looking at how much Indigenous nations built up the wealth of not only Canada itself but the global economy," says Eva. "So often, Indigenous peoples are looked at as poor, downtrodden and victims etc. when, in fact, much of our contributions to the world are in wealth and lands that were dispossessed."

At the very beginning of the process of developing the report, a community of experts was invited to participate. And not just academic experts. People with, as Eva puts it, "a record of excellence" in various areas, including land, community organizing, and building relationships, were also invited so that the discussions would be rich and fruitful.

As a result, the topic of economic justice struck a chord: Eva recalls that while some participants did not respect the value of money due to its colonial ties, others were "very assertive about money as a tool for liberation, particularly as it relates to what is owed to us as Indigenous peoples and the wealth that has been extracted from our territories as a result of our dispossession and our erasure." The outcomes of these discussions shaped Cash Back.

The impact of the report has been momentous. To date, Cash Back has been downloaded approximately 6,000 times. Educators at Toronto Metropolitan University have assigned the report in classes, shifting the language and discourse around Indigenous communities. In fact, Yellowhead supported the collective push to rename Ryerson University, publishing the first student letter in support.

The continued commitment to inclusive and deep community-building processes ensures a bright future for Yellowhead. That future includes developing ideas for more Red Papers and activating plans to become more youth-led.

For Eva, the impact of community-building is simple: "Our community and support make Yellowhead outstanding."



# INVESTING IN INTEGRITY

## THE RAVEN INDIGENOUS IMPACT FUND IS ACHIEVING MORE THAN FINANCIAL RETURNS

Since 2009, the Raven Indigenous Impact Fund managed by Raven Indigenous Capital Partners (Raven) has addressed systemic barriers that Indigenous entrepreneurs face in North America, such as accessing capital to scale their businesses. Raven invests in early- and growth-stage Indigenous enterprises that contribute to building a viable Indigenous economy in Canada and the United States.

For Stephen Nairne, Chief Investment Officer of Raven, impact investing goes beyond achieving financial returns.

“Impact means that we’re looking for opportunities where we’re obviously achieving a return of capital for our investors,” he says. “But there also has to be an explicit intention to deliver positive social and/or economic returns as well. You’ll hear a lot about ‘ESG strategies’ or ‘socially responsible strategies,’ but that’s mostly about avoiding doing harm. What Raven and other impact investors are doing is one step further along the continuum, which is about intentionally doing something positive.”

Raven is serious about doing something positive.

“We made a commitment to both our investors and Indigenous people that every dollar we invest will be directly linked to lifting up Indigenous communities,” says Stephen. “So there has to be that link and grounding toward what we would call ‘Indigenous integrity’ in terms of the way we are deploying capital as well.”

At the core of Indigenous integrity is centering relationships with Indigenous communities that are based on trust and transparency. This is how a cold call from one company to Raven — Stephen picked up the phone — turned into a meaningful investment collaboration that continues today.

Virtual Gurus is an Alberta-based talent-as-a-service digital marketplace founded by Bobbie Racette, a Cree-Métis woman of the LGBTQ2IA+ community. The service uses machine learning and algorithms to match people with underrepresented backgrounds with companies that are looking for virtual assistants and offer a living wage.

After 168 “Noes” from 168 investors, Bobbie secured \$1.25 million from Raven and other investors, and her company took off.

Stephen shared that “in the two years since Raven’s initial investment in 2020, the revenues of the company have grown tenfold, and the company recently closed an \$8.3 million financing round led by the TELUS Pollinator Fund for Good.”

Beyond the financial success, Stephen says that Virtual Gurus has “created 90 jobs for Indigenous people who are working as virtual assistants. They are able to work in their own communities, and access upskilling opportunities through the virtual academy as well.” To reflect the interests of their investors, Raven uses a proprietary system that measures success in terms of diversity, employment, equity, inclusion, and more.

Virtual Gurus is an example of what can happen when consumers and investors recognize the value of impact investing for diverse founders from underrepresented groups. The company illuminates a world of possibilities, particularly for Indigenous youth who don’t often see themselves in business spaces that are grounded in cultural integrity.

Stephen and the Raven team hope to continue creating new opportunities for impact investing.





## FAMILY COMMITTEE

All descendants of the Foundation's founder, Robert A. Laidlaw, who are 18 years of age or older may apply to the Family Discretionary Grant Fund (the Fund) on behalf of a recognized Canadian charitable organization or project. There are currently 43 Family members aged 18 and older. Eligible Family members can each apply for a maximum of \$10,000 per year, either as one grant to one organization or as a series of micro-grants to different organizations. Since the inception of the Fund in 2017, a total of \$715,451 has been granted by Family members to the end of 2021. Family members are encouraged to consider the Foundation's mission when submitting their applications. They can also collaborate with each other to submit co-funding applications, thus increasing the total amount granted to a particular organization.

The Family Committee administers the Fund and is composed of the four Family members on the Board, seven additional Family members, and two non-Family Board members. This year, the Committee welcomed three new additional Family members: Melissa Laidlaw, Nicole Denouden (Bahn), and Kathryn Simmers. On October 16, 2021, the Committee held a planning retreat at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection to explore ways to expand the Family's interest and participation in philanthropy and the Foundation.

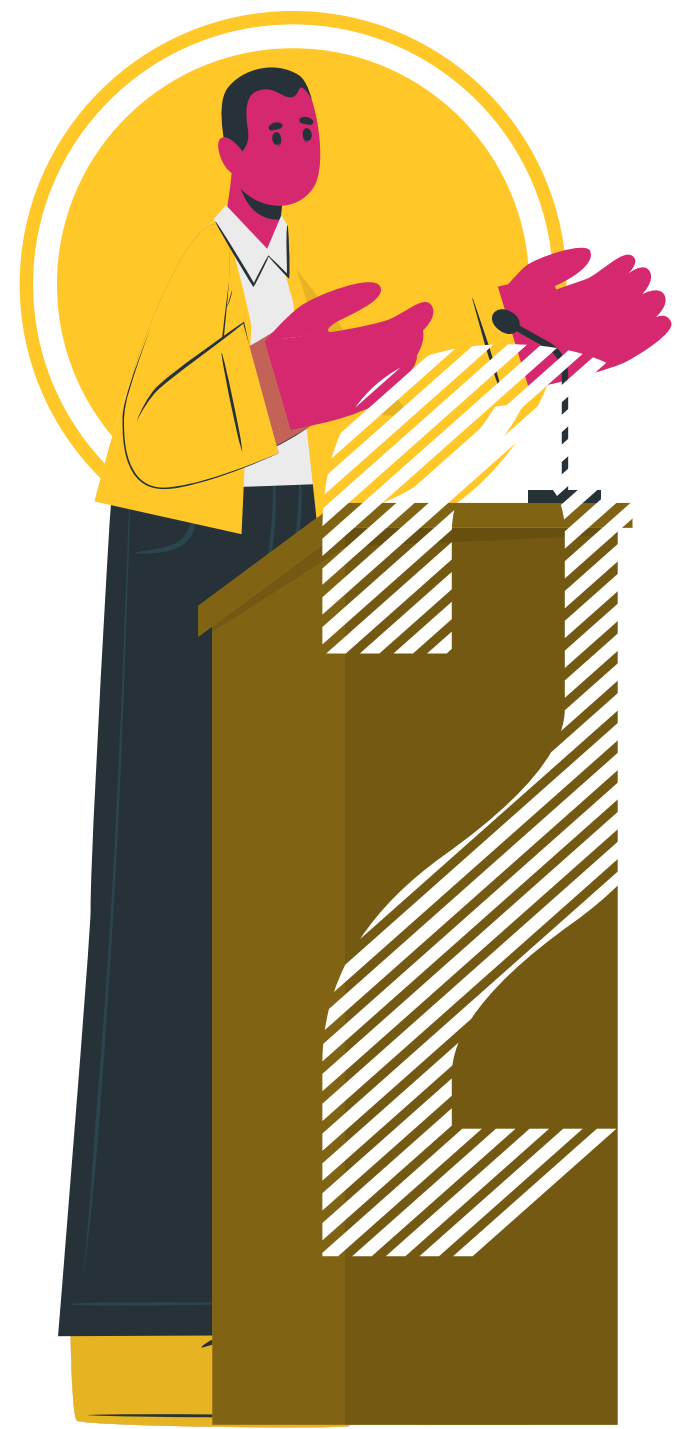
In 2021, the Fund supported 25 initiatives with a total of \$184,500. Grants were made to a range of organizations and projects that serve the arts, the environment, children, youth, and women's services. Most notably, a contribution of \$90,000 over two years was made to Brigs Youth Sail Training on behalf of past president Rod Laidlaw's children and his Weir and Denouden grandchildren. This contribution established the RWL Laidlaw Merrythought Fund (RWLL Fund) within the Brigs' Pathfinder Access Fund. The RWLL Fund's primary purpose is to provide access and bursaries to disadvantaged youth.

### Brigs Youth Sail Training

Brigs Youth Sail Training is dedicated to building leadership, self-efficacy and self-esteem in youth ages 13-18. This is accomplished through the peer-to-peer delivery of challenging programs aboard a traditionally-rigged vessel, with a focus on safety and the creation of positive and memorable experiences on board. Brigs also fosters the learning and development of practical skills, the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices, and an appreciation of the rich marine heritage of the Great Lakes.

LAIDLAW FOUNDATION

# ANNUAL REPORT



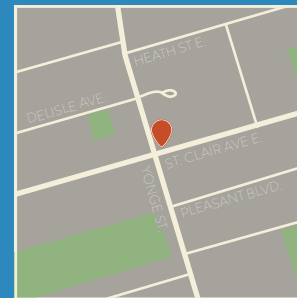
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