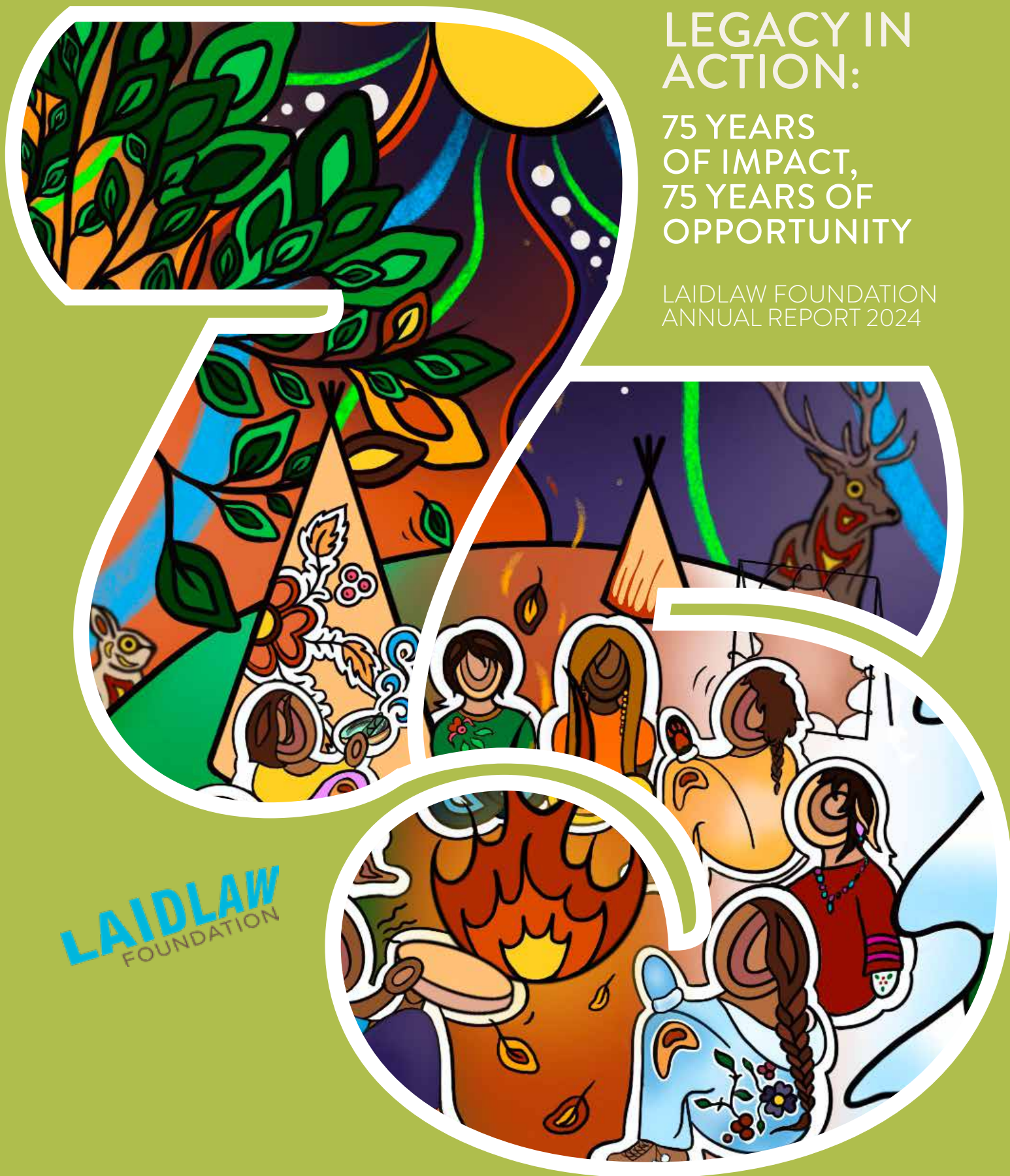


LEGACY IN ACTION:

75 YEARS
OF IMPACT,
75 YEARS OF
OPPORTUNITY

LAIDLAW FOUNDATION
ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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.

Cover Illustration: Grace Swain

CONTENTS

02	Mission and Vision
04	Staff
05	Board of Directors and Committees
06	Message from the Chair and Executive Director
10	Investment and Finance
12	Impact Investing
13	Asset Allocation
14	Impact Investing Review: A Summary
16	Indigenous Youth and Community Futures Fund
18	PopUp: Youth Direct Action Micro-Grants
19	Youth Action Fund
20	Spotlight: Near North Mobile Media Lab
22	Community, Equity and Solidarity Fund & Board Recognition Fund
23	Board Discretionary Fund
25	Laidlaw Foundation Celebrates 75 Years of Philanthropy
30	Spotlight: Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation
32	Acknowledgements

STAFF



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Finance Coordinator

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Indigenous Programs

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Director of Grants and
Community Initiatives

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Diana Demjanenko
Operations
Coordinator

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Simran Gill - IT Support Specialist

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paul Nagpal, *Chair*
Benjamin Mitsuk, *Vice Chair*
Tim Apgar
Sandra Kagango
Christopher McFarlane
Jesse Waugh
Menaka Yerramilli de Rege

Polina Kosareva
Julia Laidlaw
Janine Manning
Randy Steuart
Kathryn Simmers

OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Paul Nagpal, *Chair*
Benjamin Mitsuk, *Vice Chair*
Sandra Kagango, *Chair of Finance and Audit Committee*
Christopher McFarlane, *Chair of Granting Committee*
Jehad Aliweiwi, *Secretary*

FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Sandra Kagango, *Chair*
Paul Nagpal

Randy Steuart, *Vice Chair*
Jesse Waugh

External Advisors

Heather Brubacher
Sumant Inamdar

Ken Gibson
Andre Lewis

INDIGENOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Carissa Coe
Chevaun Toulouse
Alison Seymour

Joel Jocko
Eternity Sutherland

FAMILY COMMITTEE

Tim Apgar, *Chair*
Kathryn Simmers

Julia Laidlaw, *Vice Chair*

External Advisors

Jessica Hammell
Melissa Laidlaw

Jamie Laidlaw
Bob Smith

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

Randy Steuart, *Chair*
Sandra Kagango, *Vice Chair*
Tim Apgar

Paul Nagpal

External Advisors

Heather Hunter
Hanifa Kassam

Kristina Inrig
Ewa Townsend

IMPACT INVESTMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Paul Nagpal, *Chair*
Polina Kosareva

External Advisors

Kristina Inrig
MJ Sinha

Hanifa Kassam
Narinder Dhani

GRANTING COMMITTEE

Christopher McFarlane, *Chair*
Polina Kosareva, *Vice Chair*
Benjamin Mitsuk

External Advisors

Koubra Haggard
Paul Bailey
Celine Isimbi

Teddy Syrette
Irwin Elman

GOVERNANCE AND RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE

Benjamin Mitsuk, *Chair*
Jesse Waugh, *Vice Chair*
Julia Laidlaw
Menaka Yerramilli de Rege
Christopher McFarlane



Paul Nagpal

Paul Nagpal, Chair of the Board

Jehad Aliweiwi

Jehad Aliweiwi, Executive Director



Jehad Aliweiwi (left) and Paul Nagpal (right)

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2024 was a special year of renewal, milestones and celebrations. We started the year with a three-day planning retreat that led to the development of a five-year strategy that builds on the strengths of and learnings from the previous plan. Following the momentum created by the planning process by the Board and Staff, the past year provided an opportunity to renew our Board leadership and to reflect on and gain insight from the work that has been accomplished.

In October we gathered to celebrate Laidlaw's 75th anniversary. The Foundation chose to mark this milestone through a meaningful legacy contribution and with an intimate gathering with family and friends

On September 13, 1949, the Foundation was formally incorporated to serve a number of objectives, including these:

- "In payments to or for the benefit of any charitable or educational organization which carries on its work solely in the Province of Ontario or of any religious organization which carries on its work solely within Canada."
- "In payments to or for the benefit of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind or the Canadian Red Cross Society."

The first meeting of the Board of Directors was held on Thursday, October 27, 1949, in the offices of Blakes, Anglin, Osler & Cassels, at the Canadian Bank of Commerce Building in Toronto, with all of the first Directors of the Foundation present. One of the Board's first decisions was to appoint Roderick Walter Laidlaw as President and accept the first donation of \$50,000 from Robert A. Laidlaw.

For over 75 years, Laidlaw has reimagined how to best serve the public good by attempting to stay ahead of the curve, maintaining our relevance and partnering with many groups and communities across Ontario. This has guided the 75-year journey that took us from a small philanthropic organization to a highly regarded foundation with an enduring commitment to important work serving communities and telling their stories. Mindful of that role, we always strive to invest in projects where we can add value, balance risk with selecting community-based groups, and choose strong partners.

In the pages of the annual report, you will learn about the Foundation's gift to the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation (SCCR) to mark Laidlaw's seminal milestone. You will also find photos of the elegant reception hosted at 35 Jackes Avenue, the current home of United for Literacy and the former home of our founder, Robert A. Laidlaw. The evening featured an archival exhibit and a video presentation that provided a visual narrative celebrating the Laidlaw Family. The event showcased their role in engaging and shaping the Foundation over the years.

As we wrapped up the year 2024, we also completed the five-year plan that was adopted in 2019 to focus the Foundation's granting, researching and convening activities. The strategy guided the Foundation through significant historical events and moments. These include the COVID-19 pandemic, the murder of George Floyd and turbulent market conditions, amongst others. Over the duration of the plan, we granted nearly 23 million dollars supporting more than 500 initiatives and projects across Ontario.

Beyond granting, we have much to celebrate and more to look forward to. The coming year presents an opportunity to deepen our commitment to youth-led Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities and to invest in supporting communities on the front-lines of the fight for inclusion, belonging and justice. By working alongside them, we aim to address funding gaps and philanthropic inequities.

Following all the excitement from our 75th Anniversary Celebration and the adoption of a new five-year road map, the past year provided an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on our role in the years ahead.

As we step into 2025, we embrace a new strategy that builds on learnings, successes and lessons from the last five years. With the latest plan we find ourselves at a critical moment in the work to combat inequities. While the coming years may bring uncertainty, both in Canada and abroad, we remain confident that the strategy we have adopted for the next five years is both optimistic and relevant. The plan, and the Foundation, will continue to adapt to emerging challenges and the changing domestic and global landscape.

Acknowledging the past is a prelude to reshaping the future. We are delighted that this past year, we have secured an approval from the Board to grant beyond the 5% minimum requirement. This will allow us to provide long-term funding to a rigorously selected group of initiatives that will anchor our strategy for the next five years.

The success of the Foundation, now and over the past 75 years, has depended on the dedication of volunteer Board Members and committed Advisors. We are grateful for their generosity and fortunate to benefit from their wisdom and leadership. Thank you.

We invite you to read the annual report and visit our website to learn about the Foundation's 75th year of philanthropy for the public good. We look forward to hearing from you.



OUR DEEPEST THANKS TO BOB SMITH FOR 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

We would like to acknowledge Bob Smith’s 50 years of dedication to Laidlaw Foundation, as he takes a step back from his latest role as an external advisor on the Governance and Family Committees. As the most senior living Family member, Bob has been a tremendous resource and an anchor at the Foundation. He didn’t shy away from difficult conversations and served as a key bridge between the Family and the Foundation. He led the Foundation confidently through the pandemic and established the discretionary grants and the Family Committee. Bob was always a keen member in the committees he served on, offering his experience and attention to detail. His contribution is singular: no one has contributed in the multiple ways as he has. His legacy at Laidlaw Foundation will not be forgotten. Bob will continue advising Laidlaw Foundation on special initiatives.



Janine Manning (left)
and Jehad Aliweiwi (right)

THANK YOU, JANINE MANNING

2025 has been a bittersweet year for Janine Manning, member of Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation. Her time on the Laidlaw Foundation Board – two terms (2018–2021; 2022–2025) and a groundbreaking role as the first-ever Indigenous person in Canada to become Chair of a private family foundation – was nothing short of triumphant. Janine’s seventh and final year as ‘Past Chair’ ends summer 2025, prompting a deep reflection on what the journey meant then and now.

Her story with Laidlaw begins about 10 years ago as a community advisor to the Indigenous consultant who was helping Laidlaw Foundation carry out their Truth and Reconciliation work. The experience was one factor that convinced Janine to join the board later on. When she did, she had abundant opportunities to deepen her knowledge of both Laidlaw and the philanthropic sector.

“I was really looking at [Laidlaw Foundation] to learn how to be a better grant-maker but what I discovered was that there was so much more to the Laidlaw Foundation and the philanthropic sector than just awarding grants to deserving organizations. I did get a lot of great learning experience but I also brought a lot to the table to support Laidlaw,” says Janine.

During her three years as Chair, Janine used her platform to, among many things, raise awareness about systemic issues impacting vulnerable communities and share knowledge of decolonized granting practices such as oral reporting. For instance, Janine led the inclusion of land acknowledgements as a standing agenda item, encouraging board members to share their own.

“My fellow board members were actually shocked. They just realized that they weren’t doing them before. It was this aha moment: ‘How did we just forget that?’ Every meeting of my 3-year Chair we did a land acknowledgement... I’m happy to say they continue to do that.”

Such wise practices are rooted in trust, equity and respect in partnerships. For Janine, they’re also informed by her lived experiences, which include being a precariously housed and unhoused Indigenous youth and her professional experiences with volunteering, community engagement and inclusion practices.

Upon reflection, Janine recognizes the significance of being a first, honours what it took to get there and acknowledges the continuation of inclusion work.

“It’s a milestone to be aware of, to celebrate. But I don’t think we can have too much to celebrate about, given how it’s 2025 now and it was 2021 then. And for me to be the first Indigenous anything says how far our sector has to go to be inclusive of Indigenous leadership.”

At the same time that her term is ending, Janine is continuing her more recent work as the Executive Team Lead at Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund, a national charity that supports hundreds of different kinds of Indigenous-led initiatives, communities and organizations.

Janine will continue to support people and communities that have shown her the value of honouring wisdom. Her ultimate future goal is to support her own First Nation to establish a community foundation of their own.

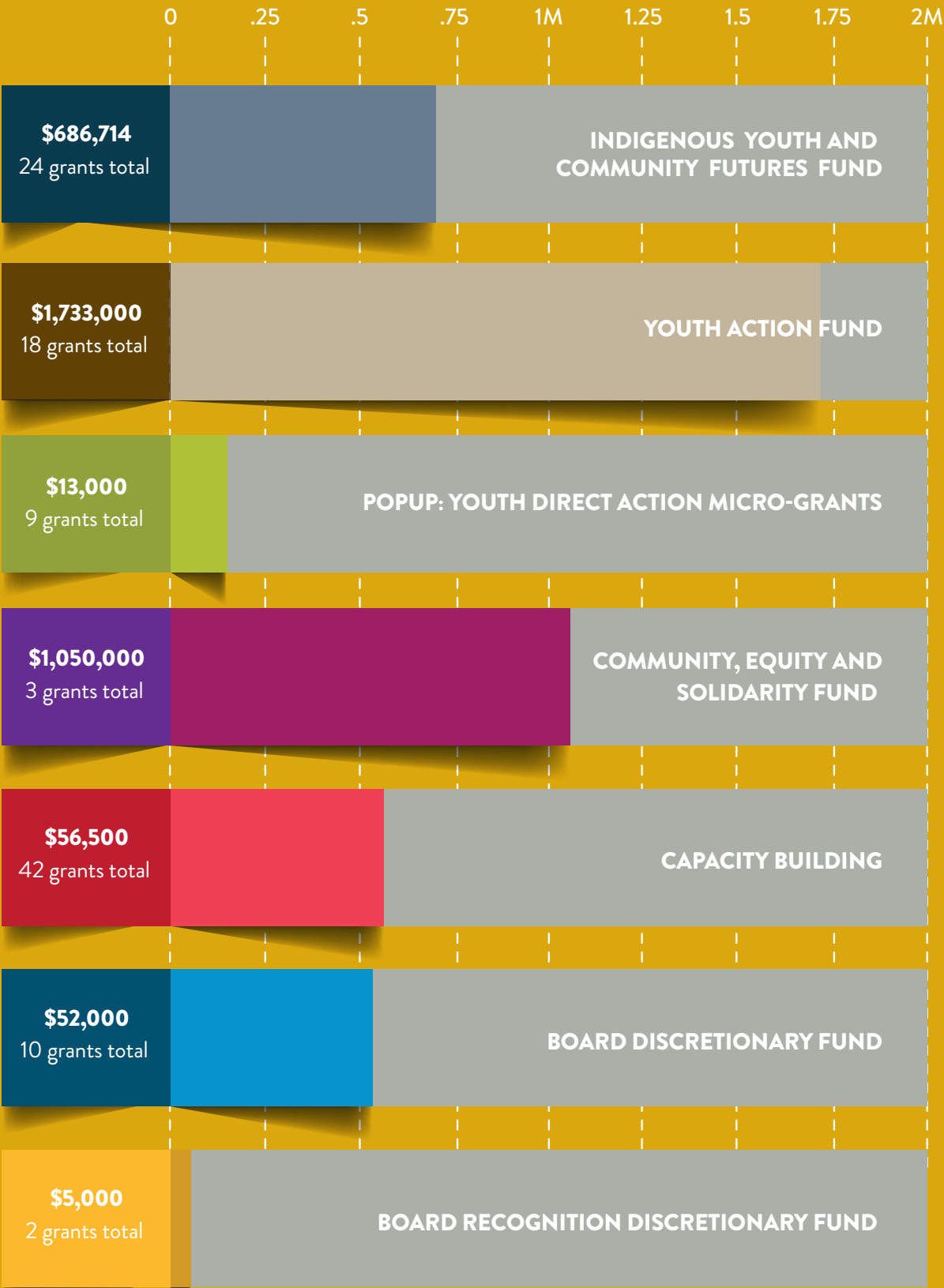
INVESTMENT AND FINANCE

INVESTMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024

	2024
	\$
EQUITIES:	
Canadian	\$ 17,033,011
Foreign	29,086,766
	46,119,777
FIXED INCOME:	
Money market	331,156
Bonds	24,016,068
	24,347,224
POOLED FUNDS:	
Canadian equities	-
Foreign equities	7,551,899
	7,551,899
Cash and temporary	3,071,108
Receivable and other	155,938
	81,245,946
Impact investment bonds, carried at amortized cost	2,088,584
	\$ 83,334,530

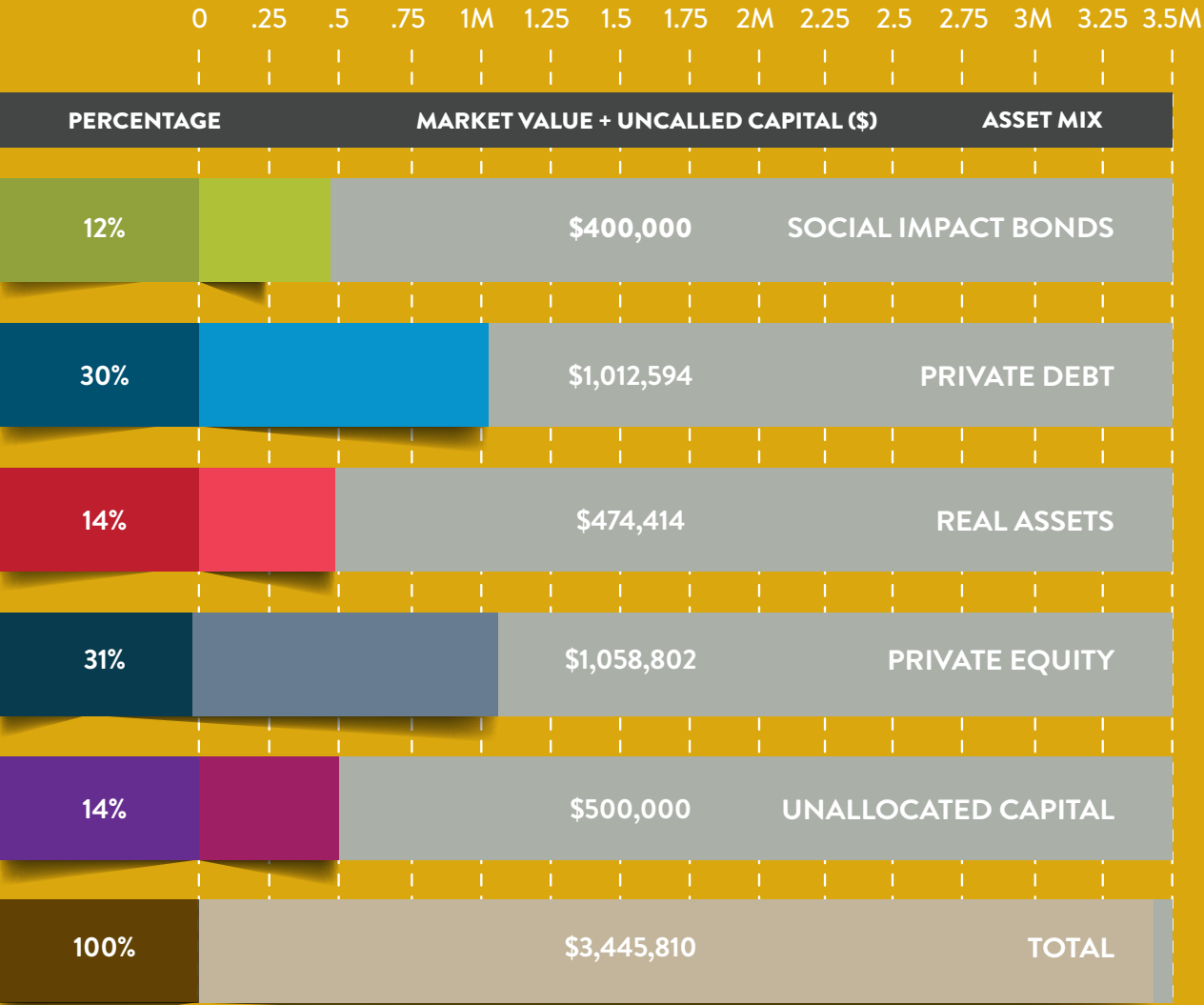
The Foundation’s fixed income investments include bonds and funds.



IMPACT INVESTING

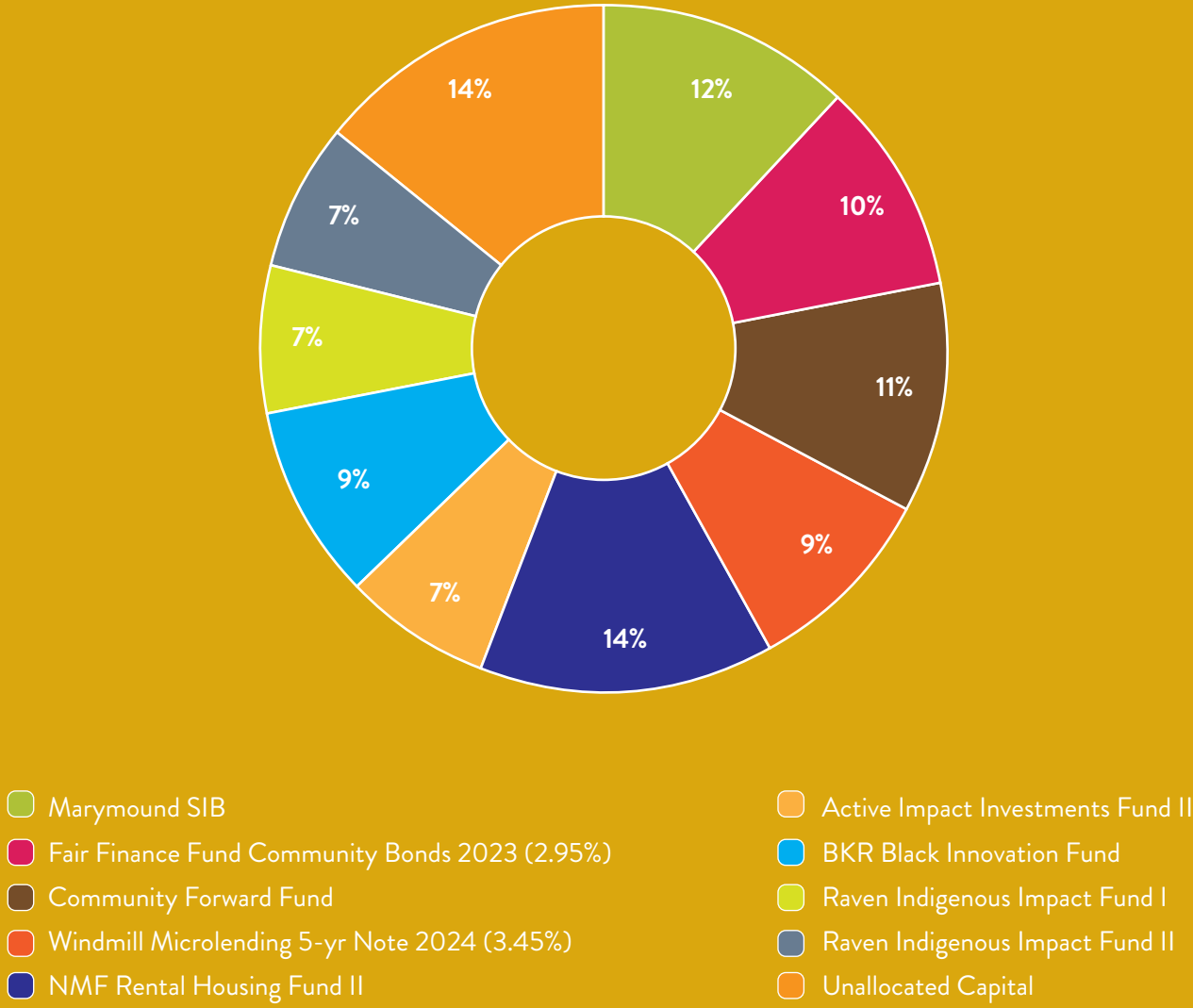
Six years ago the Board embarked on a strategy to align investment decisions with granting and programming priorities. The Foundation’s desire to explore additional ways that our assets can serve our mission and purpose led to the creation of the impact investment strategy. This included a 5% carve-out of our endowment to be invested in

opportunities, in addition to expectations in revenue, that have specific social and environmental outcomes. Currently this investment portfolio includes 9 opportunities listed on the next page. These assets are currently managed by Rally Assets.



ASSET ALLOCATION

The asset mix table and holdings pie chart shown here are based on the market value plus uncalled capital. Unlike committed capital or market value alone, this calculation captures changes in investment valuations and returns of capital.



IMPACT INVESTING REVIEW: A SUMMARY

A review of Laidlaw Foundation’s Impact Investment portfolio was led by Serkan Altay, which resulted in the approval of an additional 5% allocation to the portfolio. The following is a summary of the review.

TARGET ASSET ALLOCATION OF IMPACT PORTFOLIO:

100% private investments broken down as follows:

- Venture Capital: 31%
- Private Debt: 29%
- Social Bonds: 26%
- Real Assets: 14%

VOLATILITY AND RISK:

Increased portfolio risk from 100% Canada-focused, private investments, while lower volatility exists from infrequent NAVs.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE (HISTORICAL VS. TARGET) OF IMPACT PORTFOLIO:

Annualized since inception returns of -0.44% (May 2024). Target (gross) returns of 6.88% (5.88% net) based on fund manager expectations.

IS PERFORMANCE IN LINE WITH EXPECTATIONS?

Returns are commensurate with early-stage investments exhibiting J-curve effect, where negative returns are posted in initial years, followed by increasing returns in later years as investments mature.

KEY QUESTIONS/CONCERNS:

Investment in Raven II made before closing of Raven I; is committee comfortable making follow-on investments into new funds of managers lacking a track record?

WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF IMPACT IN THE PORTFOLIO?

Please see Rally’s RIIM report for breakdown of impact across Foundation’s impact themes. “Time value of impact” assigns greater importance to more immediate impact. Private Debt returns are concessionary but the more immediate nature of impact being generated means that the impact *per-dollar-invested* is greater than those for investments with longer time horizons to achieve impact. *Windmill* and *Community Forward Fund* provide crucial capital for non-profits and charities and create immediate impact vs. investments in Active Impact which would take decades to achieve impact, despite having higher financial returns.

MODEL PORTFOLIO OF 15% IMPACT-ALLOCATION:

Higher allocation to impact assets implies ability to deploy additional capital in varying asset classes while mitigating effects of higher management fees and other expenses involved in maintaining a diversified portfolio. Using a 15% allocation (midpoint of impact allocations from survey of private foundations), the model portfolio invests \$8.5M of incremental capital across global public equities, global bonds as well as higher-yielding investments in Real Assets, Other Alternative Assets and Private Debt while excluding Social Impact Bonds and Venture Capital to manage the level of risk. Studies show that impact investing in global public equities offers greater breadth compared to private investments offering greater depth.

MODEL PORTFOLIO RETURNS:

Higher return of (9.9% net) from allocation to new categories (public equities, debt and alternative assets), and lower allocation to social bonds.

MODEL PORTFOLIO RISK:

Lower risk from additional asset classes, despite higher volatility from public assets (i.e., increased frequency of valuations vs. private assets).

MODEL PORTFOLIO IMPACT:

Enhanced impact reporting from third party providers like T Rowe, alongside a significantly higher level of impact alignment vs. existing portfolio given additional investments in broader categories.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FINDINGS:

Existing returns are in line with expectations (taking into account the J curve). Expected returns could be boosted significantly through investment in new opportunities in existing asset classes alongside new asset classes. **(1)** Inclusion of global investments (within public markets, Canada accounts for less than 4% of the world’s market cap); **(2)** Modify asset allocation strategy to be static vs. dynamic; **(3)** Explore higher-return investments within Private Debt (**PaceZero**), Real Assets (**Theia Partners**), Alternative Assets such as litigation funds (**Restitution Capital**), public equities and debt (**T Rowe Price**).

ASSET CLASS	TARGET NET IRR	TARGET WEIGHT
Social Impact Bonds	4.77%	26%
Private Debt	3.29%	29%
Real Assets	7.50%	14%
Venture Capital	11.59%	31%
TOTAL	6.88%	100%

ASSET CLASS WEIGHTS	CURRENT PORTFOLIO (5% OF ASSETS)	MODEL PORTFOLIO (15% OF ASSETS)
Public Equities	-	10%
Public Fixed Income	-	10%
Social Impact Bonds	26%	8%
Private Debt	29%	25%
Real Assets	14%	25%
Other	-	13%
Venture Capital	31%	9%
TOTAL	100%	100%

ASSET CLASS RETURNS	CURRENT PORTFOLIO (5% OF ASSETS)	MODEL PORTFOLIO (15% OF ASSETS)
Public Equities	-	10%
Public Fixed Income	-	10%
Social Impact Bonds	4.8%	8%
Private Debt	3.3%	25%
Real Assets	7.5%	25%
Other	-	13%
Venture Capital	11.6%	9%
GROSS RETURNS	6.9%	10.9%
Rally Assets Management Fee	-1.0%	-1.0%
NET RETURNS	5.9%	9.9%

\$700,000

INDIGENOUS YOUTH AND COMMUNITY FUTURES FUND

Through the Indigenous Youth and Community Futures Fund (IYCFF), Laidlaw Foundation 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 - \$700,000	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
ENAGB - Thunder Bay	\$30,000
Connor Lafortune (NMKNS)	\$30,000
M'Wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre (Georgian Bay Two Spirit Pow Wow)	\$30,000
Brunswick House First Nation (Wahkohtowin Development)	\$30,000
Auntie's Place	\$30,000
Donovan Gordon Tootoo (Culture Care: Qilaujjarniq)	\$30,000
Jerome Cook (Jerome)	\$30,000
Georgian Bay Mnidoo Gamii Biosphere (Georgian Bay Anishinaabek Youth)	\$30,000

INDIGENOUS YOUTH AND COMMUNITY FUTURES FUND - \$700,000	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Justice Seidel (Kiskinohtahiwewak partnership)	\$30,000
Bagida'waad Alliance Inc.	\$30,000
Waabinong Head Start Family Resource Centre (Bawaating Child Welfare Warriors)	\$30,000
Finding Our Power Together	\$30,000
Eshkiniigjik Naandwechigegamig, Aabiish Gaa Binjibaaying - ENAGB Youth Program	\$30,000
The Waterways Collective	\$30,000
Casha Adams (Biizidun)	\$30,000
Dwadewayehsta' Gayogoho:nq'	\$30,000
Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre (Anishinaabemotaadidaa Omaa Nogojiwanong)	\$15,000
Wabshkaa Animkii Benesii (The WAB after-school program)	\$30,000
Community Safety Initiatives Thunder Bay (Regional Multicultural Youth Council)	\$30,000
Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre	\$30,000
13 moons land based learning	\$30,000
Aronia Collective (Kawiraksa Krew)	\$25,000
Finding Our Power Together (Rising from our Roots)	\$30,000
Batchewana First Nation Reserve (Wiiminodoodaadizo)	\$30,000

\$13,000

POPUP: YOUTH DIRECT ACTION MICRO-GRANTS

This fund supported Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities dealing with increasing social insecurity and lack of resources to access support. Echoing South African disability activists, the PopUp Grants 2024 espouse the “Nothing about us, without us” slogan. Black, Indigenous, and racialized youth know how best to support their own communities. When it comes to collective and community support, we want to amplify multiple perspectives including leadership from Black and Indigenous communities. As

Laidlaw Foundation’s current strategic plan for 2019–2024 wraps up, the PopUp Grants, an annual micro-grant stream for youth groups and grassroots organizations, also comes to a close. For the next five years, Laidlaw Foundation will continue the shift to prioritize investing in Black and Indigenous youth–led work through IYCFF and the new Black Youth Fund.

POPUP: YOUTH DIRECT ACTION MICRO-GRANTS - \$13,000	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Power to Girls Foundation	\$1,000
Jamie Kim / Journaling Collective	\$1,000
The Neighbourhood Group Community Services / Toronto Youth Cabinet	\$1,000
An Ashleigh-Rae’s Mother’s Day Event / Ashleigh-Rae Thomas	\$1,000
Unlock Democracy / Vote 16	\$5,000
The Youth Village Organization (TYVO)	\$1,000
Zhané Stimpson / Queersgiving Community Dinner	\$1,000
Rose Jones	\$1,000
Toronto Kiki Ballroom Alliance / Journey to Black Liberation Ball	\$1,000

\$1,733,000

YOUTH ACTION FUND

The Youth Action Fund offers grants to grassroots initiatives working with youth who are underserved by the education system and overrepresented in the justice and child welfare systems, prioritizing Black and Indigenous youth–led projects. 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

YOUTH ACTION FUND - \$1,733,000	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
ENAGB Youth / Sour Springs Longhouse	\$100,000
Northwest Black Collective	\$100,000
Ardoch Algonquin First Nation / Restoring Our Roots	\$100,000
Project Agape	\$100,000
The People of Tomorrow	\$100,000
Disability Justice Network of Ontario	\$100,000
CAFCAN / Injaz	\$100,000
Power to Girls Foundation	\$100,000
YAAACE	\$100,000
TNO / Uthando Collective	\$100,000
Assembly of Seven Generations	\$100,000
Endaayaan Awejaa	\$100,000
FLOW Financial Literacy Online Workshop Management	\$100,000
IMPACT ’n Communities	\$100,000
Peacebuilders International (Canada)	\$100,000
Unity Charity	\$100,000
Somali Scholars	\$33,000
Think Twice	\$100,000



NEAR NORTH MOBILE MEDIA LAB

For young students, health and wellness can be the difference between surviving and thriving in schools. However, access to tools and resources is mostly questions instead of answers, especially in Northern Ontario. In 2022, Allie and Chelsea of Ways to Wellness Project (WTWP) successfully completed Creative ACE, a collaborative multi-disciplinary arts project that emphasized student wellbeing. Laidlaw Foundation's Youth Action Fund (YAF) brought arts classes to the alternative high school Laurentian Learning Centre (LLC) for the first time.

“When you’re a smaller city or town and the schools have less students in them, they get a lot less funding. It’s unfortunate because the more oversized a school is, the less attention and needs are getting met for each of the students. There are so many benefits to being in a smaller school, and that should be financially supported,” says Allie, who graduated from LLC in 2015.

“It inspired my idea for the Ways to Wellness Project because through the arts, we were seeing [students] develop not only art skills but social, emotional, physical, and spiritual wellness, and those are the key to a happier, healthier future for our youth; especially for those who are already being underserved and are struggling,” says Allie.

As the programming continued, Allie and Chelsea wondered how they could further expand the concept of health and wellness into inclusive, accessible programming for the LLC. However, when Allie discussed ideas about that expansion with the school, funding became another question.

After the success of Creative ACE, the school hired a full-time art teacher. However, funding for arts supplies was still a question. Applying for another YAF grant became an answer.

The course code PPZ3C became another answer. Allie learned that it’s an underused, optional course for Ontario high school students that emphasizes a holistic approach to health and wellness.

With a successful YAF application, the WTWP could now use the concepts of PPZ3C to facilitate programming across curricula that encourages students to engage with their physical, cognitive, emotional and spiritual wellness.

Programming also included collaborations with local businesses, community organizations and cultural facilitators that addressed cultural and generational wellness. Chelsea’s collaborative idea, the Nishnaabemwin / Anishinaabemowin Language Deck (ALD), is an incredible example. The deck is an open education resource that contains bilingual flashcards with phonetics. WTWP printed and distributed 1000 hard copies across the province.

“I personally didn’t have that connection with my grandparents...I really had to seek it out. The idea of incorporating [the deck] for students who may not get that cultural connection, or maybe they don’t have grandparents.... whether they’re Indigenous or not...this would be a beautiful way for everyone to connect with the language,” says Chelsea.

The WTWP project continues to help students gain confidence, improve emotional regulation skills, graduate and see brighter futures for themselves.

Allie and Chelsea hope that WTWP can receive further funding to continue addressing ongoing questions that need innovative, community-led solutions.

NOTE: A free digital version of ALD can be found at www.earthandskystudio.ca.



NISHNAABEMWIN ANISHINAABEMOWIN LANGUAGE DECK

BILINGUAL FLASHCARDS
WITH PHONETICS

\$1,100,000

COMMUNITY, EQUITY & SOLIDARITY FUND

The relief fund addresses inequities in philanthropy and extends solidarities to communities impacted by the pandemic, as well as by racism, colonization, and systemic exclusions.

COMMUNITY EQUITY AND SOLIDARITY FUND - \$1,100,000	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Calgary Foundation - Foundation for Black Communities	\$500,000
Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund	\$500,000
Toronto Metropolitan University (Ryerson University) (Yellowhead Institute)	\$100,000

\$5,000

BOARD RECOGNITION FUND

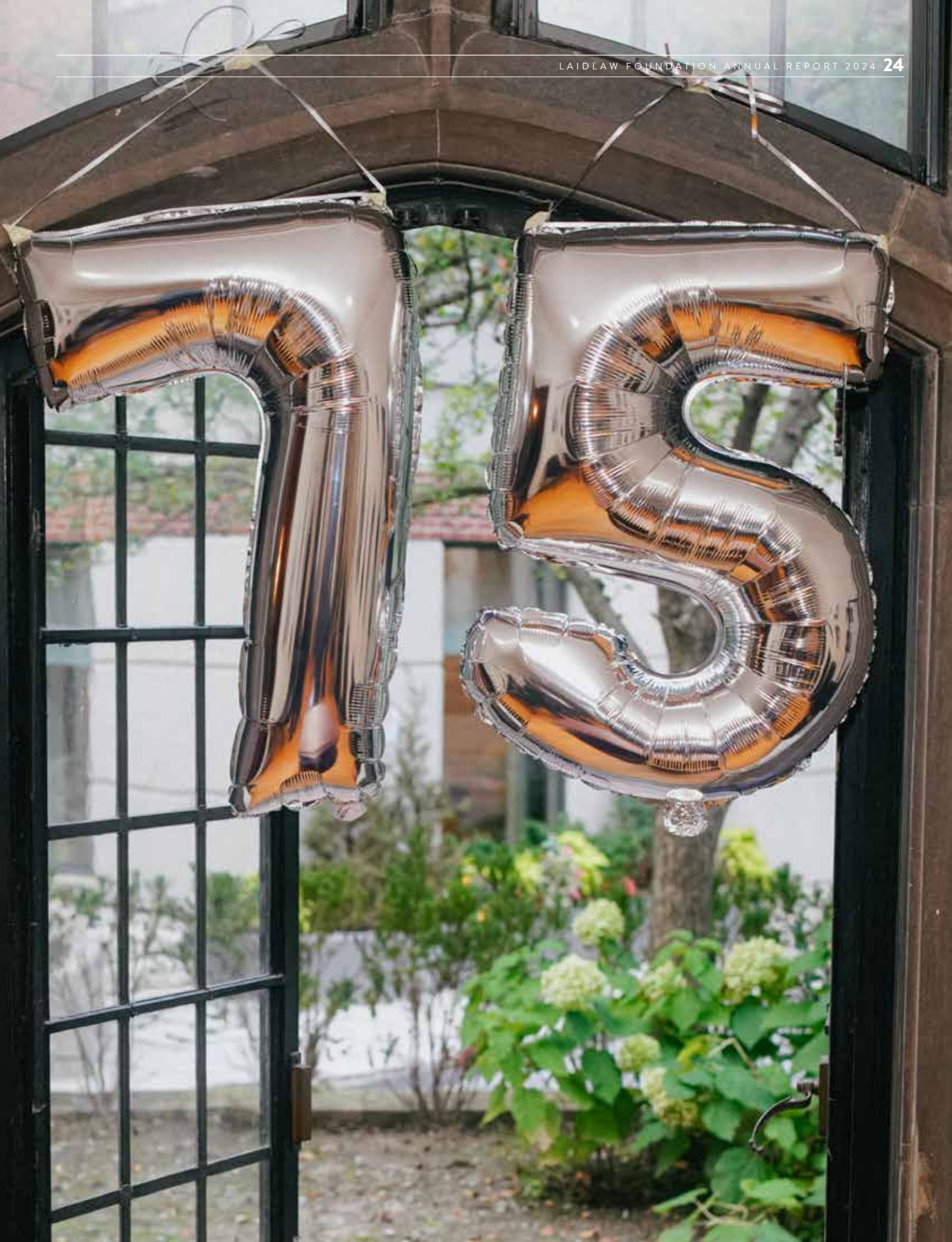
BOARD RECOGNITION FUND - \$5,000	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Small Change Fund in honour of Ralph Garber	\$3,000
Belmont House Foundation in honour of David Silcox	\$2,000

\$52,000

BOARD DISCRETIONARY FUND

In recognition of the leadership and contributions to the Foundation by its Board of Directors, Family, and Staff, corresponding Discretionary Grant Funds were established. During each fiscal year of the Foundation, every Board, Family, and Staff member is allocated an amount to grant to their choice of charity or grassroots group that aligns with the current mission and vision of the Foundation. Grants in 2024 went to a range of initiatives in support of the environment, women and children, arts, and youth organizing, among others.

BOARD DISCRETIONARY FUND - \$52,000	
ORGANIZATION NAME	AMOUNT
Toronto Foundation	\$5,000
Women’s Centre For Social Justice	\$5,000
Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation	\$5,000
Westcoast Sacred Arts Society	\$2,000
Trails Youth Initiatives	\$5,000
The Breach	\$10,000
Anchored Minds Foundation	\$5,000
Camp Winston Foundation	\$5,000
Toronto Rape Crisis Centre	\$5,000
Toronto Community Justice Fund	\$5,000



LAIDLAW FOUNDATION CELEBRATES 75 YEARS OF PHILANTHROPY

To mark the 75th anniversary of Laidlaw Foundation, a reception was held on October 1, 2024, at 35 Jackes Avenue, the former residence of Robert A. Laidlaw who established the Foundation in September 1949. The evening was a chance for the Laidlaw Family, current and former Boardmembers, advisors, and staff, partners and beneficiaries to connect and celebrate the Foundation. The venue featured a curated, multi-faceted exhibit showcasing the history of the Laidlaw Family through archival photographs and artifacts, a slideshow with the Foundation's milestones, and a walk-through history of the Laidlaw Family depicted on banners. This was put together with the tremendous expertise of our consultants from Heritage Professionals. We would also like to thank United for Literacy, the charity that now operates from the former residence, for generously allowing us to host our event in their building.



Tim Apgar, great-grandson of RA Laidlaw, grandson of Rod Laidlaw, and son of Lyn Apgar, as well as Board director and Chair of the Family Committee, shared remarks on his own journey with the Foundation and the Family's legacy. The following quotations are excerpted from his remarks.

“In my teenage years, I attended a few events, but philanthropy still didn't really hit home. I didn't fully ‘get it.’ What I did start to understand, though, was the importance of giving back—of standing for something greater than yourself, and doing something about it by getting involved. And now, I think that these lessons were passed down not just from my mother, but from generations of the Laidlaw family and are part of the spirit of our family.”



Early on, the Foundation aligned itself with the family's passions, supporting organizations like The National Ballet School, Central Neighbourhood House, SickKids, the ROM, Upper Canada College, and U of T. Institutions that were near and dear to the roots of the family in Ontario. This support wasn't just about giving money—it was about working directly with organizations, helping them grow and thrive. Over time, RA's children, Rod and Nick, became key leaders within the Foundation, making changes that helped build and expand on that initial vision from 1949:

- In 1960, Rod traveled to the US to study different foundation models, a move that helped formalize and refine our approach to philanthropy. It wasn't just about what was being done, it was about HOW it was done.
- In 1974, the Family Committee was formed, bringing Bob, Jamie, and Lyn into leadership roles and directing the Foundation's focus toward more youth-based grant-making. At the time, Jamie and Lyn were in their mid-20s and Bob was a very youthful 32—a powerful example of how our family believed in passing on responsibility to the next generation early and empowering youth to make decisions.
- And in 1977, the Foundation opened itself to outside support and direction on the Board, recognizing that the scope of our ambitions required new perspectives and greater capacity. This move wasn't the norm for family philanthropy back then, but opening ourselves up to listening to new voices and empowering those voices was a bold step forward.





“These key moments mark our family’s ongoing commitment to growth and innovation. At each step, Laidlaw Foundation embraced change—challenging the status quo, even when it wasn’t the mainstream thing to do.

And it’s those very changes that shape where we are today. We stay true to our roots by focusing on Ontario, supporting youth, and continuing to find innovative ways to make a difference. Honouring the vision of those that came before us and adapting them to our changing society as time goes on.”



The evening featured two music students, Anna Štube and Suraya Gade from Glenn Gould Music School who performed classical pieces on the harp and violin. The School has been the recipient of many grants from the Family Discretionary Fund.



Paul Nagpal, Chair of the Board, remarked that “anniversaries are opportunities to reflect on the past, celebrate accomplishments, and learn from a history of partnerships, investments, granting, and convening. There is a lot to be proud of as we look back at the past 75 years. There is a rich legacy of granting across many important sectors: the environment, arts and culture, and children and youth. And there is a proud tradition of working collaboratively with others on many important social and cultural issues and a history of bold sector-building partnerships.

Generally, these kinds of milestones are a testament to endurance and continued relevance. For Laidlaw Foundation, it is a moment to publicly recommit to the founder’s dedication to philanthropy, and to the public good. It is also a chance to recognize the Family and the ongoing commitment to enabling meaningful change. Additionally, we want to make a meaningful legacy contribution to a cause or to an organization whose work and mission inspire us and remind us of the philanthropic vision of the founders of the Foundation.

In 2019, we marked the 70th anniversary with an elegant gala at Canada’s National Ballet School. During that event, the Board awarded the anniversary gift to Feathers of Hope, a Thunder Bay-based Indigenous-led organization that advocates for youth in care. This year, we are proud to provide a gift of \$75,000 to the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation. This gift will support the process of building a multi-purpose physical space that will be the first home for the Somali Community in Toronto. With this gift, we believe that we pay tribute to the Foundation’s tradition of supporting community groups to acquire spaces, especially community theatre groups. Also, with this contribution, like the 70th-anniversary gift, we affirm our ongoing commitment to communities that continue to be significantly underfunded.”





SOMALI CENTRE FOR CULTURE AND RECREATION

“What role does philanthropy play in helping us reimagine community but also helping us reimagine what social infrastructure looks like? How do we build infrastructure?” These are some of the questions that Zakaria Abdulle, Co-Chair of the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation (SCCR), contemplated while considering a partnership with Laidlaw Foundation. The possible answers began with an exploration of how Laidlaw’s storied past could inform the present.

“Laidlaw’s been a funder of many Black and Indigenous groups. As a Black-led, Black-serving and Black-focused organization, it made complete sense that Laidlaw would want to step in and have a significant role with philanthropy and their dollars, to help us get things off the ground.”

The SCCR is a Black-led organization that aims to build a multi-purpose, sustainable community space in Toronto that becomes the focal point for creativity, recreation, heritage and culture for Somali communities. The Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation (SCCR) is a Black-led organization that aims to build a multi-purpose, sustainable community space in Toronto that becomes the focal point for creativity, recreation, heritage and culture for Somali communities.

Together with Somali elders, youth and the broader Toronto community, SCCR aims to create a community-driven space that responds to the critical gaps in social infrastructure, the lived experiences of Black people and the abundant dreams of Black communities for sustainable spaces to thrive.

To Zakaria, Laidlaw’s support represents the importance of shifting narratives from charity to justice. “Justice helps people thrive and charity helps people survive,” he says. In fact, he sees Laidlaw as a city builder, despite philanthropic organizations rarely being associated with the term.

Case in point: Last fall, at Laidlaw Foundation’s 75th anniversary event, SCCR received a legacy gift of \$75,000 to support the process of building and acquiring space for the SCCR.

“Doing this work takes years. We’re standing on the shoulders of elders and a lot of those elders were so proud and grateful that we were able to get things on the ground and get things moving. They [felt] relief, excitement and hope...there was a level of hope restored.”

The gift was essential to the process of structuring governance processes that helped fundraising in private sectors.

“Without their initial support, we wouldn’t have been able to do all the governance work required to raise the pre-development dollars required to begin to do a lot of the work with the private sector. Setting up the board, getting your governance together, doing a lot of capacity building...”

Youth voices and lived experiences have been key to realizing the SCCR vision. They’ve contributed artistic contributions, community engagement, architectural design suggestions. The wisdom of the elders has also been a driving force.

On March 1, 2025, it was announced that SCCR will receive a federal investment of \$20 million. The historic achievement of infrastructure investments is rare for Black communities. Zakaria believes that infrastructure for Black communities should not be a rare thing. Nothing of this scale and significance happens overnight. The SCCR in particular was over 40 years in the making.

Zakaria is optimistic about the grand opening of SCCR and the potential impact it can have on communities across Toronto.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to recognize the many contributors to this report, including Kinmond Smith (Designer), Grace Swain (Artist), Jean Boampong (Copywriter), and Dimitra Chronopoulos (Editor).



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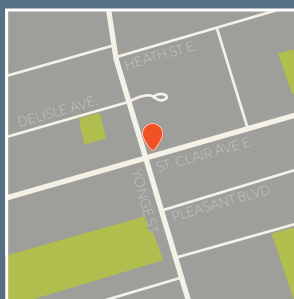


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