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# PORTFOLIO

SUMMER 2020



## Sounds of community

### Music Is A Weapon

For Lucas Coffey, music is more than just sound. It's a collection of voices, beats and instruments, coming together to create intricate and beautiful harmonies. It's also a powerful tool to bring people together.

"What's really remarkable about music is the way that people can all add their own individual rhythm to a collective orchestra," he says. "It's a chance for each of us to come together and build something bigger than ourselves." That's the real purpose behind Coffey's drumming workshops.

Coffey's interest in community building dates back more than a decade, when a close friend began holding bake

sales to raise funds for an international volunteering project. Her patience and persistence inspired Coffey. He wanted to find a way to help others like his friend raise funds and create positive social change.

So in 2009, Coffey created the Music is A Weapon Community Building Society. At first, the Society's scope was broad, working to support other social causes by providing bike-powered electricity for concerts and rallies, and running occasional drum circle workshops in schools across the city. Drum circles, an activity he'd first been introduced to while in university, were a powerful way to encourage connections and strengthen relationships. Coffey began offering in-school workshops for >

#### Money on a mission.

Put simply, the Social Enterprise Fund (SEF) is a loan fund. We lend money to social enterprises that want to make things better in the community and in the world. We provide patient capital at reasonable rates to help put dreams to work.



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elementary students, and was impressed with the increases in social skills and self-confidence he often saw.

“We started out with fundraising events for different causes and non-profits, but eventually we started going to festivals and schools, and started getting more exposure as we did more workshops,” he says. “As we did, I started to see music as a really valuable way to empower kids.”

As his aptitude for managing a classroom grew more evident, Coffey began to focus more exclusively on the workshops. He founded Rhythm Rhythm Rhythm, a social enterprise focused on bringing drumming programs into schools, and was eager to expand the business. But more students meant more drums would be needed. And more drums would require capital, a scarce commodity in the early days of Rhythm Rhythm Rhythm’s operations.

Fortunately, Coffey learned of a business plan pitch competition offered by SEF to support social enterprises in Edmonton. He excitedly drafted a business plan and submitted an application. But his hopes were soon to be dashed.

“In hindsight, that plan was all over the place,” he laughs. “Thankfully, SEF was up front and honest about it. It was a bit hard to hear at the time, but now I know it really helped me hone in on what was driving Music is A Weapon forward.”

Determined, Coffey returned to the drawing board, refining the organization’s vision along the way. He returned to SEF with a more workable plan and was awarded financing for instruments that would be critical to Rhythm Rhythm Rhythm’s future growth: additional drumming supplies and a vehicle.

SEF’s support arrived just in time, it seems. Rhythm Rhythm Rhythm’s in-school residency exploded in popularity, selling out more than a year in advance.

“It’s been a game changer for me. Before SEF, I felt like the schools were in the driver’s seat and I was just along for the ride. But now I have room to keep developing new programs,” he says. “When we started, we just wanted to drive social change. As we’ve developed, it’s become about teaching students how to play live music and develop relationships, both with the music and with each other.”

Thanks to the support of SEF, Coffey was able to expand Rhythm Rhythm Rhythm from offering only in-school residencies to offering online teacher training as well. And based on the organization’s success to date, it seems likely that this beat will go on. □



# Making great ideas come to life

## Startup Edmonton

Startup Edmonton describes itself as “a campus, co-workspace and accelerator that kickstarts” local startups. Startup continues to create buzz in the 100-year-old Mercer Building in downtown Edmonton. SEF provided start-up capital to the organization. □



# Living a more sustainable life

## Earth’s General Store

Looking for a way to lessen your environmental footprint? Or maybe you’d just like some tasty food for lunch or dinner. Then Earth’s General Store is for you.

Since 1991, Earth’s General Store has been the go-to place in Edmonton to find the tools and knowledge to live a greener, more sustainable life. The store carries supplies for all aspects of your life, and in recent years, expanded to carry a wide array of food products, including fresh, packaged and frozen food products.

SEF provided operating capital to expand the store’s operations. □

# La vie est belle

## Alliance Français of Edmonton

Alliance offers a full range of French language classes, plus lots of ways to enjoy French culture — from wine tastings to cooking classes to French film. SEF provided Alliance with operating capital. □

# Funding a brighter future

## Finance for Good

Social impact bonds are a new financial mechanism aimed at increasing capacity of social programs in local communities. Finance for Good is the first purpose-built social impact bond intermediary in Canada, working with government, service organizations and investors wishing to explore this new mechanism for community good.

SEF provided the company with start-up capital. □



Photo credit: Gibbs Gage Architects and Diamond Schmitt Architects

# Cowboys and chorales

## Calgary Opera

The Calgary Opera is breaking new ground — literally — through a unique partnership with the Calgary Stampede and development funds from SEF. These two great institutions are partnering to build a 50,000 square foot production centre which will include practice halls, administrative offices, plus a 300-seat rehearsal hall and practice space, located on the Stampede grounds.

In addition to providing production space for the founding partners, they expect it will also provide opportunities to many other community organizations. □



# Creating a community for all

## Canadian Mental Health Association

As part of its mission to support Edmontonians living with mental health issues, CMHA-ER provides safe and affordable housing. SEF was proud to provide a mortgage to the organization to purchase an apartment building, supporting its goal of mental health for all through integrated community living. □

# Little house off the avenue

## Senior Citizens Opportunity Neighbourhood Association (SCONA)

If SCONA's walls could talk, they'd speak volumes about the community that passes through the Whyte Avenue building's doors each year. The centre focuses on a special group of the population — "senior" seniors, with their members' average age over eighty. Since 1975, the centre has hosted countless events, from weekly dinners to play recitals, computer lessons and holiday gatherings.

In her time as executive director, Cathy McLean has watched the organization grow from serving less than 200 members to now nearly 500. The growth, while welcome, has brought its own challenges for an organization with an extremely tight bottom line.

In the past few years, the organization has developed partnerships with a number of other community groups around the city, like the Ritchie and Kenilworth Community Leagues and the Rutherford elementary school. These partnerships, coupled with Edmonton's aging population, has led to an explosion of interest. >



# Keeping history alive

## Lougheed House

Lougheed House is a National Historic Site located in Calgary, and owned by the Province of Alberta. The house was built in 1891 as the home of Sir James Lougheed, a Canadian Senator and grandfather of Alberta's former premier, Peter Lougheed. The house is operated through by the Lougheed House Conservation Society, non-profit society, through a fee-for-service contract with the Provincial government. The society was established in 1995, and was the original driving force behind a \$12 million renovation of the sandstone mansion.

SEF has provided short-term bridge financing to the Society. □

Many SCONA members live on fixed incomes and depend on the centre for social engagement as well as health and wellness support. For them, it's a community hub, where they can gather with friends and sign up for low- or no-cost services like hair cuts, massage therapy and recreation activities.

"Most of our members are women and many of them are part of a generation where they raised their families and were not encouraged to work outside of the home, so they have very little or no pension. So they're living on miniscule amounts of money," she says, adding that many members also face isolation after the death of a spouse. "We give them the opportunity to share who they are and what their experience has been so they can develop genuine, close friendships and social networks."

As one of only two dedicated staff members at the organization, McLean has taken on extra duties as membership numbers have increased. Unfortunately, the government grants and resources previously accessed by SCONA have not kept



"I don't hesitate to say that without SEF, we would be having a very different conversation today. I'm not sure we could've continued," she says. "SEF helped us cover operating costs, our programming costs, basically everything we do."

Now, McLean is confident in the organization's future. "It (2018) was a bit of a tough year for us, but through it we realized we are on the right path. We're making a difference in people's lives," she says. "It's going to take us some time, but ultimately we're going to move forward. And that wouldn't be possible without SEF." □

# Bringing quality food to Albertans

## Organic Box

If the old saying that "you are what you eat" is true, it would just make sense to try to find the best quality food that you can for you and your family. The Organic Box has now grown beyond its role as Edmonton's go-to home delivery source for organic food from the best local and international producers, to delivering the goodness to a growing list of Alberta communities. With support from SEF, The Organic Box expanded to a 17,000 square foot warehouse to better meet its own needs, as well as acting as an operational centre for food trucks, farmers' market vendor storage and local small scale food producers. □

# Music to our ears

## CKUA

CKUA started over 75 years ago in a small room on the University of Alberta station. Since then, CKUA has evolved into a mature listener-supported public radio station that is greatly responsible for giving many musicians their first airplay. Tommy Banks, P.J. Perry, Jann Arden, Joni Mitchell, kd lang are just a few of the artists who found their early support at CKUA.

CKUA has purchased and moved its operations into a building as unique as its playlist. Designed by architect Gene Dub, the new building is wrapped by the reconstructed exterior of the historic Alberta Hotel. Not only does the building provide a safe and healthy workspace for the station's employees and 450 volunteers, it is an environmentally secure archive for the historically priceless, 105,000 item library. The space also provides opportunities for public performance, as well as rental capacity. SEF provided a loan for tenant improvements such as studio, office and other facility construction. □



## More than just a studio on the Ave. Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts

When the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts first opened its doors in 2003, it quickly became known as a hub for both the city's artistic community and individuals with disabilities.

Inspired by the story of Nina Haggerty, a woman who lived with polio from an early age, the centre enables individuals with developmental disabilities to discover themselves as artists. After spending more than fifty years institutionalized, Haggerty was finally introduced to art in the last

decade of her life. Her passion was evident, and she spent the next decade creating works of art for many friends and support staff.

Today, the Nina offers a similar ray of hope for artists with developmental disabilities. From a bright studio in the heart of Edmonton's Alberta Avenue neighbourhood, more than 200 burgeoning artists are able to explore a range of media from drawing to painting, fibre arts, clay and more. Through one-on-one mentorship, small group sessions

and larger workshops with professional and practicing artists, these individuals are empowered to express their experiences and emotions.

Although the Nina's clientele and community support have grown steadily from the time it opened, the organization's growth hasn't come without its own challenges. As is often the case for many non-profits, funding became particularly challenging as the Nina's popularity increased without a matching increase in financial support. >

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"As a non-profit, we were in a difficult place," says Hollo (now retired). "We have a good relationship with the bank, but there just aren't a lot of options for non-profits. We did manage to get a couple of credit cards, but that wasn't quite enough to get by."

Faced with the prospect of further cuts, the Nina came to SEF. At first, the organization accessed a small loan to cover payroll before securing a larger amount to bridge its funding gap.

The Nina has since repaid its SEF loan in full and in recent years has enjoyed a more modest pace of growth. In 2017, the Nina opened a secondary studio in Edmonton's Orange Hub, a city-owned centre for non-profit organizations.

"We know we can't be everything to everybody, so we're doing one thing, and doing it well," says Hollo. "And that is providing a place for people with disabilities to become practicing artists." □



## All the world's a stage Edmonton Musical Theatre

The Edmonton Musical Theatre has over 35 years of experience in putting passion on the stage. Whether you're a child, or a child-at-heart, the society provides training and real performance experience on the stage. Their students have taken this passion for musical theatre to stages around the world, as well as creating appreciative audiences who know what it's like to be on the other side of the footlights.

SEF provided bridge financing that helped the organization move to its new home in Edmonton's Woodcroft Community Hall, as well as operating capital. □

## Affordable abodes Métis Capital Housing Corporation

In the mid-2000s, there was a desperate need for safe, affordable housing for low- and moderate income people of Metis and Indigenous descent across Alberta. In 2007, the Metis Nation of Alberta developed the Metis Capital Housing Corporation (MCHC) that would not only house the vulnerable population, but also offer services such as rental supplement for students, home repair and down payment assistance for those in need.

Thanks to funding assistance from SEF, the MCHC now owns 341 units in five urban centres throughout the province, as well as a Family Reunification Centre and Senior's Lodge in Edmonton. □

## Enriching lives by enabling potential Excel Society

Some of the best ideas come out of brainstorming sessions in the basement - and sometimes it's in a church basement. The Excel Society was born in 1964 from what started as a small venture out of the basement of Robertson-Wesley Church in Edmonton to help integrate those with mental, physical and developmental disabilities in both Edmonton and Calgary.

Now, they have nearly 600 staff and serve over 575 people every year. With help from SEF, the Society is able to expand their reach and help each client expand their skills, contributing to a better quality of life. □



# Home is where the art is

iHuman

For most people, the years of adolescence and early adulthood are trying times. From dealing with the pressures of school and family, to managing growing independence, these years are often among the most transformative, but also the most challenging.

For Catherine Broomfield, executive director at iHuman Youth Society, these years are the ones that matter most. Broomfield and the team at iHuman spend each day helping vulnerable, marginalized youth aged 12-24 engage and reintegrate with the greater Edmonton community through arts-based programming.

Whether offering studio space for sculpting, painting and performance art, or encouraging dialogue about graffiti as an art form, the iHuman team works to help youth harness their creative energy to drive positive social change.

When Broomfield joined iHuman in 2010, she was excited about the potential of this young and growing organization. At that point, iHuman was just entering its own teenage years and it looked like change was on the horizon. Since 1997, the organization had inhabited more than half a dozen different rented spaces around the city, but growing demand for iHuman's services meant a more permanent, stable location was needed.

"When we were renting a space, or when we, as an organization, were homeless, we couldn't provide security to our youth. We didn't have space or resources for them, so ultimately we were compromising their potential," she says. "And that's hard on the kids, it's hard on the staff; it's hard on everyone. It's not an enviable position to have to turn young people away, or to have them lose trust in us just because we didn't have a permanent space."

Something needed to change. Broomfield, along with the iHuman board of directors, set sights on purchasing a property so that the organization could >



provide uninterrupted support to as many young people as possible. They found a former restaurant supply warehouse just a few blocks from the location they were renting. The new building would offer 22,000 square feet of space, more than double what they occupied at the time. And building ownership would mean they could offer consistent, dependable support to youth in need.

Of course, there was a catch. The building would require extensive renovations before they could move in. They launched a capital campaign, seeking to raise more than \$15.5 million for an extreme makeover of the space. In time, they secured support from individual donors, businesses and government partners. Everything was shaping up, until the price of oil dropped.

"We weren't counting on any major economic changes. When the price of oil fell, some of our donor pledges and agreements with vendors and suppliers fell through," says Broomfield. Yet in the face of this financial uncertainty, she remained determined. "We had the support of the community, so we knew we had to make it happen."

With plans for the building already in development, iHuman approached the Social Enterprise Fund. This new facility could revolutionize both the services they offered and the number of youth they

served. But without additional financing, this long-held dream might not become a reality.

"We had grants and agreements already in line, so we looked to do a modern-day barn raising," says Broomfield.

*This new facility could revolutionize both the services they offered and the number of youth they served. But without additional financing, this long-held dream might not become a reality.*

"We still had some of Edmonton's largest construction companies on board to help us with the work. But we needed SEF to help us with the last piece of financing."

It didn't take much from SEF to make the dream of property ownership a reality for iHuman. Just \$250,000 was enough to fill the gap and ensure their modern-day barn could be raised. In the spring of 2014, construction crews began work and iHuman's future began to take shape.

Four years later, Broomfield is amazed at the transformation she's witnessed. iHuman's two-storey facility, located just east of Edmonton's downtown core,

serves anywhere from 60 to 150 youth each day. In addition to space for arts-based programming, it offers laundry and shower facilities, a mental health clinic and crisis outreach supports.

"The last few years have offered a lot of learning for us, as an organization, we've grown so much," says Broomfield. Although this growth has been an eye-opening experience, it hasn't been without its own challenges. From dealing with a flooded building to managing property break-ins, the iHuman team has learned to take these growing pains in stride. It's these kinds of challenges and opportunities, she notes, that wouldn't have been possible without the support of the community and SEF.

"The project wouldn't have come together without SEF's support," says Broomfield. "SEF understood what it meant for us to be a non-profit, and knew how important it was for us to have this space to serve the community."

And maybe the best news of all? iHuman has joined SEF's "Paid-in-Full" club, not just paying off its loan, but doing so early. That means the organization can move into the future concentrating on the most important thing, namely its mission to transform young lives. □





# Lights, camera, action!

## Metro Cinema

Metro Cinema is a community-based non-profit organization devoted to the exhibition and promotion of Canadian, international and independent film and video in Edmonton. Housed in the historic Garneau Theatre, SEF provided a loan to purchase new equipment to ensure everyone can continue to enjoy films, regardless of the technology era in which they were recorded. □



# Promoting potential Raising resilience It takes a village

## Big Brothers-Big Sisters

Since 1962, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Edmonton (later amalgamating with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton) has been providing meaningful and invaluable mentorship to youth in Edmonton and surrounding areas. With the help of community partnerships and volunteers, children in the program are provided with support, friendship and guidance, yielding positive relationships, safe places and access to services to help them develop their own personal strengths and skills. □

# Starting with a strong foundation

## CASA

A pillar in the Edmonton and surrounding communities, CASA's four locations offer over 20 programs designed to assist families going through mental health crises. Through evidence-based, community-based and trauma-informed programming catered to each family, CASA's skilled teams of counsellors, psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, social workers and occupational therapists are able to offer accessible and effective mental health services to children and families from the Edmonton Region and Central and Northern Alberta. □

# Giving back to building strong, healthy communities

## Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations

Volunteerism is alive and well in the city of Calgary, thanks in large part to the Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO) - and with funding assistance from SEF. The CCVO was created in 2004

to help strengthen the city's vibrant volunteer community as an advocate and adviser. Over 15 years later, this member-based charitable organization has developed invaluable resources and knowledge that it shares with the

nearly 26,000 non-profits and charities so that they can continue to offer free programs, activities and services that are vital to the community, all while giving voice to critical issues affecting the sector. □

# The art of living well

## Arts Habitat

We know that artists enrich a community. Festivals, galleries, music venues — we love what these things do for a neighbourhood. But how do you get the right mix of studio space or a quiet room to write, or even a place to live — at an affordable price?

That's why, in 1995, the Edmonton Arts Council founded Arts Habitat Edmonton, a non-profit organization designed to help artists find affordable accommodations and facilities while promoting cultural and artistic activities across the city.

Arts Habitat opened Edmonton's first artist live/work space in 1999, a former warehouse space that became a welcoming home for craft, literary, performing and visual artists. It offered

affordable living and workspace for artists, and valuable gallery space to promote their work. Over the next 15 years, it would serve as home to 40 residents, and provide exhibition space for 60 artists in its hallway galleries.

In response to Arts Habitat's growing body of work, the City of Edmonton released its Art of Living plan, outlining a threefold-mandate: find and manage space for artists, advocate for the development of future arts hubs, and increase awareness and appreciation of the arts in Edmonton.

With the City's funding, "We wouldn't just be a building for artists; we'd be an organization for them," explains Julian Mayne, Executive Director for Arts Habitat Edmonton. >







New community partnerships also brought new opportunities and in time, Arts Habitat was able to continue its original mission of offering space to artists through a co-op offering 16 live/work spaces above the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts.

In 2010, and with a loan from SEF, Arts Habitat and Artist Urban Village purchased The Artists Quarters project, an 18-storey tower which would offer affordable and sustainable studio space for individual artists and small arts organizations, as well as 64 units of live/work space. But without funding from Provincial and Federal governments, its future remains uncertain.

"Since it was first announced, we've designed it, we've got the development permit done, but we haven't yet had the Province or Federal governments agree to help fund it," says Mayne. "So we're



pushing, and we've been shortlisted, but for now we're just waiting."

Not to be dissuaded, Arts Habitat purchased McLuhan House in 2012, a historic home in Edmonton's Highlands neighbourhood, with the mortgage provided by SEF and the support of the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Arts Council. After extensive renovations, Arts Habitat relocated its offices to the home and

offered space to artists, non-profit arts professionals and cultural industry professionals.

Today Arts Habitat is, at its core, a liaison for the arts community, connecting makers and creative producers with city administration, developers, property owners, and the greater Edmonton community. They continue to pursue the best ways for Edmonton's artists to find—and afford—a room of their own. □

## Partnerships make impact investing possible

Social enterprises, like any small businesses, require access to capital to grow. Given their sometimes unusual structure or business sphere, social enterprises often face challenges finding the financing they need through traditional sources. SEF acts as a patient lender, working with these enterprises to meet their financing needs, whether through a big or small loan. Loans are repayable with interest — and in this way, the funds can go on to assist other social entrepreneurs.

SEF was established in 2008 through a unique collaboration between the Edmonton Community Foundation and the City of Edmonton. Other contributors to the fund have included the United Way, the Alberta Real Estate Foundation and several private contributors. So far, the fund has invested over \$35 million in more than 60 projects. More than \$14 million has been paid back, ready to do more good in the community as new loans.

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