



**People Helping People Make a Difference**

**Annual Report from the Chairperson of the Board  
Candora Society of Edmonton  
June 19, 2019**

This past year has been another successful year for Candora programs due to the contributions of the staff and volunteers and I would like to extend our grateful thanks from the Board. Through their hard work and dedication, Candora continues to provide the support to the people and community. We appreciate their efforts in meeting the needs of those who need our assistance.

Though we have had some changes in staff at Candora, the staff continues to listen to the growing and changing needs of the people by adding new programs as well as maintaining many of our essential programs.

The Board also recognizes the community stakeholders and funding agencies who continued to support Candora financially and encouragement to provide inspiration to our community. We thank all of them for the support that is given.

With the return of all present board members and addition of new members this fall, we look ahead to another wonderful new year. A year, we hope that the community spirit continues to thrive and will positively impact the lives of the people of our community.

Respectfully submitted

Linda Osborne  
Chairperson of the Board



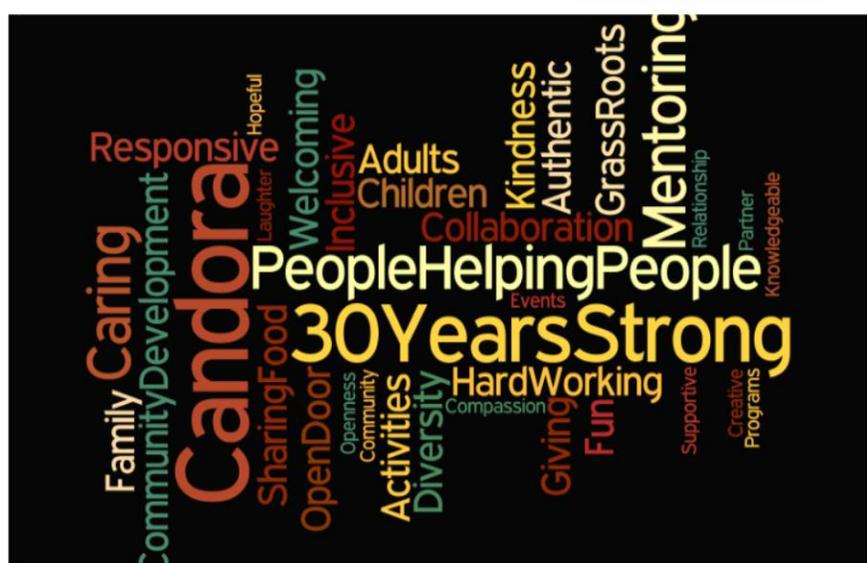
**Board of Directors  
2018-2019**

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Kelly Siroski, Director  
Doug Stroud, Director  
Valerie Cudmore, ED \*non-voting member

## Executive Director Report

The past year marked The Candora Society's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. From the humble beginnings of Candora (Can-Do-Rundle and Abbottsfield), the organization has grown and changed a great deal. Initially formed by community members who wanted to see and work towards community change, The Candora Society remains committed to that goal. The wisdom, ideas, questions, guidance, and stories from lived experience of present and past staff members, volunteers, participants, community members, and our community partners have all played a vital role in shaping the organization. We are so grateful for the people and community partners who have committed their time, energy, talents, resources, and financial resources to help make Candora what it is today...30 years strong!

The Candora Society observed its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with celebrations across the organization; one on October 4, 2018 for participants, and an Open House for the community in November, 2018. At the October celebration, we invited participants to share some of their memories of Candora. Interspersed throughout the annual report, you will see some of their comments. The following comment was shared by one of Candora's long-term participant/volunteer: *"Candora has been a faithful friend of the community since day one. People can depend on Candora, no matter the age, race, color of skin or sex. I help with the sewing class and always very happy to meet with them. Good work Candora, hope you'll have another 30. God bless".*



Candora works from a participant centred approach, and is responsive to community strengths, requests and needs; therefore, change is a constant for the organization. This year however, change has been a key theme as we have moved through a restructuring process. Diane Sopher, a long-term leader, manager, visionary and supporter of the organization will be retiring in June 2019. She has been with Candora for over 26 years. This along with other changes in the leadership structure created the opportunity for a reorganization of positions and responsibilities within Candora's leadership team. To aid us in our process, Candora contracted an external consultant to do interviews and gather information from staff across the organization. The information gleaned from the interviews has been important in shaping the reorganization of roles and responsibilities; and will be useful as we continue to move through this time of transition.



**Executive Director Report contd.**

Amidst celebration, change and connecting with the community in various ways, the day to day work of Candora programs and services moves forward. For the fiscal year ending March 31, 2019, through the wide variety of programs and activities offered in our 4 sites, The Candora Society assisted in total, 883 families and 1092 registered individual participants. Of those, 36% of the individuals, and 42% of the families we worked with self-identified as Indigenous or Metis. Candora also works with many newcomers to Canada with 27% of individuals, and 24% of the families we assisted self-identified as Multicultural. Our one to one support programs have seen an increase in the number of individuals and families that we are providing assistance to over a longer period of time. In addition to the work we do with our registered participants, a total of 12,099 drop in visits were recorded for individuals who attended our monthly special events, weekly Community Lunch, attended our summer programs, tried out an activity before they registered, or accessed brief one-to-one support for: bus tickets, emergency food, faxing documents or use of Candora's public phone. The people who participate in Candora's programs are reflective of the demographic, social, and cultural diversity of the community.

*"I can't thank Candora enough for all the support and care they have so graciously provided with every single visit."*

In 2018/19, work on the Evaluation Framework has continued to be a high priority for the organization; and continues to shape the way in which we plan and do our work as an organization. Another key organizational priority is building and maintaining partnerships with community members and organizations, as these are foundational elements of community development. Candora staff participate in many strategic partnerships around issues such as: financial literacy, employment, adult literacy, family violence prevention, mental health action plan, inclusion for newcomers to Canada, Indigenous and Newcomer Serving Agencies, and CAPC – a collaboration of similarly funded projects focused on early childhood development and prenatal care; just to name a few. This year we participated in an exciting new project titled "The Family Table". The family wellness initiative grew out of our long-term partnership work at the Community Campus table and expanded to include C5 located in NE Edmonton, and Terra Centre. We are grateful to our community partner, the Rundle Health Centre – Primary Care Network for bringing the idea forward and helping to foster the development of the program curriculum and delivery.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their support and guidance this past year. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for their support and the great work they have done this year! None of this would happen without them, our volunteers, and community members! Last but not least, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to Diane Sopher for her tireless dedication and commitment to the mission, vision and work of The Candora Society. Diane will most definitely be missed! 2019-20 will not be the same without her working alongside us on a daily basis; however we will live by the phrase Diane always says..."onward and upward". We look forward to our continued working relationship with Diane and Jim Sopher as volunteers.



Submitted by Valerie Cudmore  
June 19, 2019

**Community Action for Children (CAC) 2018-2019**

CAC has once again successfully gone through another year! The CAC community includes staff, children, parents and community members working together to see our children succeed. “We worry about what a child will become tomorrow, yet we forget that he is someone today,” Stacia Tausche. It is all the little teachable moments, the times that you smile at a child, observe a child, get down on one knee and truly communicate with a child, read to a child...these are the things that matter. Staff at CAC continue to work hard at engaging with our children and families and the greater community. Candora’s vision, mission and values support the activities going on every day in our children’s programs, at the Preschools, Cruisers and Crawlers, Health for Two and More, Family Active Living, The Discovery Centre, The Snuggle Room and our family literacy activities.

The Preschool programs at our three sites were operating at near capacity for the year. While there have been some staffing changes; staff have worked very hard at making these changes seamless for our most important participants...the children! We have attended many fieldtrips throughout the year, including a very memorable trip to the brand-new Royal Alberta Museum. It has been fulfilling to observe the growth we have seen in many of our children who started our program when they just turned three years old, to the active, curious little learners they are by the end of the year.

The Discovery Centre (DC) has been overflowing with children this year! DC supports our participants while they are attending other Candora programs. We have been able to support these families with a quality child-centered environment that focuses on key experiences for their children, both in the Discovery Centre and the Snuggle Room.

"A hundred years from now, it will not matter what kind of car I drove, what kind of house I lived in, how much money I had in the bank... but the world may be a better place because I made a difference in the life of a child."  
Forest Witcraft

WE ARE TEACHERS



The Crawlers and Cruisers Too activity at the ARC has continued to be very well attended. Parents report receiving support in areas of child development, peer support and just having fun with their children! Topics of interest to the families who attend are explored, while the children ages 0-3 can participate in fun activities with their families. This is the program within which we do many family literacy activities.

Family Active Living has been consistently attended by families who have connected and continue to support one another. We have seen families who get to know one another throughout the year create babysitting opportunities for one another, socialize outside of programs and genuinely create friendships.

All our programs have hit their mark this past year are we are looking forward to a wonderful new year.! There will be some changes coming up this year with the Rundle site closing and moving to the Abbottsfield Recreation Centre (ARC). It will be sad to see Rundle close; however, staff, children, parents and community member will rise to the challenge and make the coming year the best one yet!!

Crystal Nahaiowski  
CAC Project Coordinator



## Family and Community Resource Centre Annual Report 2018-2019

Over the course of the year the Family and Community Resource team had more than 3500 individual support visits covering everything from just lending a supportive ear to helping women leave situations of domestic violence. One of our favorite examples was helping a participant to get her first passport. She then helped her elderly parents who don't speak English complete their passport applications so they could travel as Canadians for the first time.

Program highlights included the Family Table which was a new project with the Rundle Health Centre, C5 HUB, and AHS. The program ran for 8 weeks and sought to help families find ways to improve their family's nutrition, physical wellness, and family functioning.



We also grew our Indigenous Creations craft group with local artisan Janet Blyan by moving it to the afternoons in 262. Janet ended up connecting with Shelley, our English Language Learning teacher. Together they did a series of crossover lessons where Janet taught the ELL students Indigenous beading which gave an opportunity to teach about Indigenous cultures in Canada to the Newcomers in the class.

2018-2019 was also a year of changes for the Family and Community Resource Centre. One of our long-term Family and Community Resource workers left our team to pursue new opportunities. We gained a new Coordinator in Lucas Stone, and Sheena Daly joined the Family and Community Resource team as the Volunteer Coordinator.

*"I'd like to say thank-you to all the staff for the help in tickets and emergency when I needed it! Also in participating in your Programs and activities in the winter and summer. Also the Round Dances and Pow Wows."*

We also introduced a big change to Health 4 Two (H42), our at-risk pregnancy support program that we run in partnership with AHS. Candora is the largest provider of H42 in North Edmonton and we have been running this as a drop-in program for many years. This year we started a H42 support group by merging it with Baby and Me to provide the H42 supports in a group environment. This has allowed the women to make connections with each other and continue their relationships well into the first year of their child's life.

One of our newest programs is a partnership with the Edmonton Community Legal Centre which has begun doing monthly legal presentations for our community on topics like immigration, family law, and tenant's rights. This program was initiated by Arleen, one of our community volunteers.



It has been a year of continued successful programs with demand outstripping our ability to provide in many areas. Our sewing program always has a long waitlist. It has also been a year of new partnerships. We are looking forward to continuing to develop our relationships with participants, the community, and our partners.

Lucas Stone  
Coordinator of Resource and Community Initiatives

### Adult Learning Programs

2018 was the year we shook things up. New location, new staff, new structure and new energy!

At the end of June 2018 Candora moved our Training Space out of Rundle Center and back into Riverview Crossing mall. This was an opportunity to offer a convenient site for participants with children who access The Discovery Center and our main office.

Why not also incorporate a new staff structure with a new physical structure! Natasha was heading on maternity leave and Danielle was ready to move on. This seemed like the time to hire a full time ELL Instructor and new staff to support CEPP, STEPs and WSG. Shelley McLean, Janine Waddleton and Danai Ratisai joined the Candora team in July and August of 2018. This was also when the position - Coordinator of Adult Learning Programs was created.

With regards to the other adult learning programs, we are continuing our partnership with Somali Canadian Women and Children to deliver Women’s Savings Group for Newcomers (WSGN) and are developing a new connection with Islamic Family Serving Agency to deliver the same programming. Again, new partnerships to spread the good works that the staff are committed to delivering. Caring for Children continues to be a presence and has had many successful connections for the women attending the sessions.



This has been a year of growth and development. Participants, staff and the partnerships formed are the foundation of our community development work. Those who know Candora, know that everyday is new and we are constantly evolving to meet the needs of people who walk through the door. It is this continued commitment and connection that allows us all to be a part our community.

This year as an extension of this community development, the staff and participants also had a major effect on the U of A medical students. I was given the honor of attending the final session for the students as they presented to their classmates about their placements. The students spoke of the impact that Candora participants had on them personally, and how they will take the learnings received with them as they become physicians. They spoke of the time they spent in the English Language Learning class and how they now have a better understanding of people. This included, human understanding, cultural understanding and resources for how to use language and materials effectively. It was an amazing presentation.

I would like to thank all the above-mentioned people, community, staff and partners who make Candora what it is. We are better people for knowing one another!



Susan Catlin  
Coordinator of Adult Learning Programs

This participant was in the Pace program back in 2002...

*“I really enjoyed the Pace Program. It helped with my work goal learning new things, and meeting new people, and I really enjoyed volunteering with the community lunch and selling 50/50 tickets at the Oilers hockey game. Thank you”*

## Special Thanks to All Our Government and Association Funding Bodies

- ✚ Government of Alberta
  - Advanced Education - Community Adult Learning Program
  - Children's Services
  - Community and Social Services
  - Community and Business Services
  - Gaming and Liquor Commission
- ✚ City of Edmonton
  - Family and Community Support Services
  - Community Investment and Operating Grant
- ✚ Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association (ECALA)
- ✚ Government of Canada
  - Employment and Social Development Canada – Canada Summer Jobs
  - Public Health Agency of Canada
- ✚ Empower U (Alberta Treasury Branch, United Way, City of Edmonton, EPCOR)
- ✚ The Stollery Charitable Foundation
- ✚ The Edmonton Community Foundation Vital Signs Grant
- ✚ Donate-A-Ride

We also want to thank the **Community and Corporate Donors** that help make our programs possible. Some of our Corporate Donors include:

The Lions Club  
Abbotsfield Recreation Centre Society  
Edmonton Food Bank  
Christmas Bureau of Edmonton

...And many private individual donations



YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS OVER THE YEARS HAVE HELPED CREATE THE FOLLOWING RESULTS...

“HELPED ME FEEL INCLUDED IN THE COMMUNITY AND ALSO LEARNED THE CANDORA SOCIETY HAD PROGRAMS TO HELP ME LEARN COOKING AND HOW TO GET A JOB”

“I FIRST MOVED TO EDMONTON IN 2007 AND DISCOVERED THE CANDORA SOCIETY. IT WAS AWESOME TO CONNECT WITH OTHER FAMILIES AND PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAMS THEY OFFER FOR KIDS.”

“MY FAVORITE MEMORY AT AND WITH CANDORA WAS COOKING WITH COLLECTIVE KITCHEN BACK IN 2003-2004, AND MY FIRST TIME LEAVING MY GIRL IN DISCOVERY CENTRE. THANK YOU SO MUCH”

“I REMEMBER BRINGING D TO MOMMY AND ME. IT REALLY HELPED”

“I AND C ENJOY COMING TO LEARN AND MAKE NEW FRIENDS AT PRESCHOOL”

“HAPPY 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY! CANDORA ARE THE BEST PEOPLE I MET IN MY LIFE. THEY WERE VERY HELPFUL TO ME WHEN I HAD NO ONE ELSE TO TURN TO.”

AND MANY MORE...