



**2019 - 2020**  
**Annual Report**

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### Our Mission

The DDRC promotes awareness and supports communities to include persons with developmental disabilities, thereby strengthening communities for all citizens.

### Our Vision

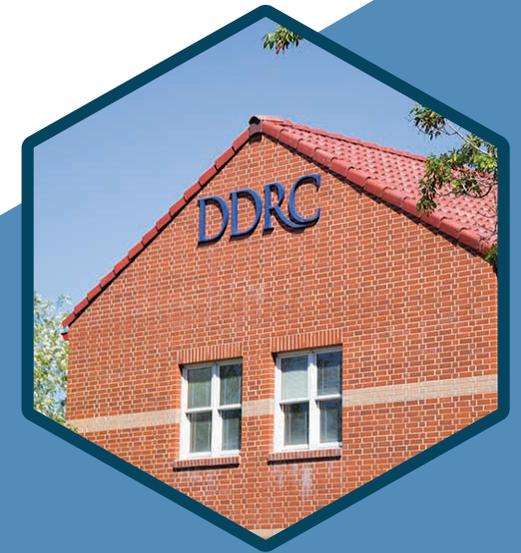
Everyone Belongs.

The Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre (DDRC) of Calgary is a non-profit, registered, charitable organization dedicated to facilitating the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in the community in real and meaningful ways.

Operating under the direction of a volunteer Board of Directors, the DDRC's activities are funded through government contracts, fee-for-service programs, fundraising events, corporate partnerships, and individual donations.

Our business number is 10683 0060 RR0001.

# Message from the DDRC



The past year was full of great accomplishments and progress. DDRC client's commitment to their goals, and the support networks around them, have continued to inspire inclusivity in our communities.

The DDRC's LINK program, which provides augmentative and alternative communication support, has flourished over the past year. Clients have found success in growing their independence with the support of LINK, and we are proud of the implemented communication support plans and American Sign Language (ASL) workshops for clients and staff.

Program and Agency successes aren't the only things we celebrate at the DDRC. The individual accomplishments of DDRC clients are wide-spread and inspiring. In finding a rhythm in their own personal growth, clients like Phung, as featured in this annual report, can realize their potential and positively impact those around them.

These impacts are what make our city great.

As we round out a year of success, the Agency faces challenges ahead with the COVID-19 pandemic. At the end of the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the DDRC has begun the transition to offer virtual and safe supports for clients with developmental disabilities amid an uncertain future.

Luckily, DDRC clients and staff alike, are resilient, dedicated, and ready to meet the task at hand.

Helen Cowie, CEO

# 2019-2020 Board of Directors

President/Chair: Tom Shindruk  
 Vice President: Kyle Guild  
 Treasurer: Shawna Taylor  
 Secretary: Hunter Hobbs  
 Director: Dayna Johnson  
 Director: Ali Waissi  
 CEO: Helen Cowie



Board President Tom Shindruk

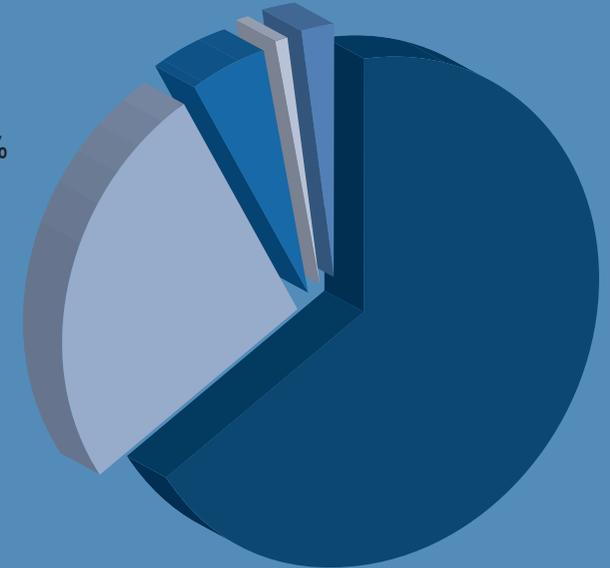


DDRC Client Ryan and CEO Helen Cowie

## Financial Reporting

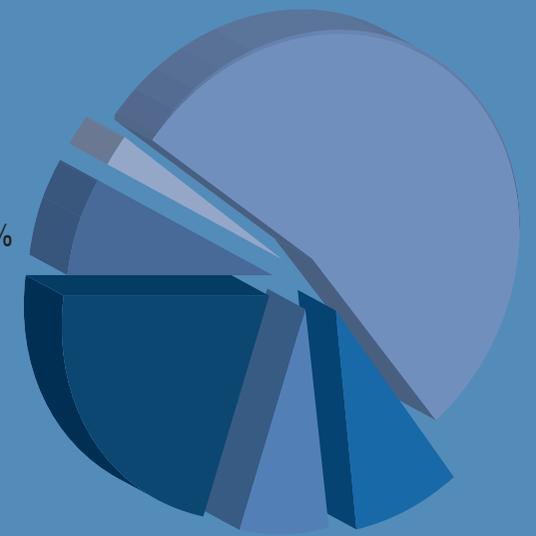
### REVENUE

- PDD DIRECT SERVICES - 66%
- PDD DELIVERY - 26%
- FSCD DELIVERY - 5%
- FEES FOR SERVICE - 1%
- OTHER FUNDING - 2%



### EXPENDITURES

- PROGRAM COMPENSATION - 54%
- PROGRAM ADMIN COMPENSATION - 8%
- EMPLOYEE BENEFITS - 7%
- SUPPORT ALLOWANCE OVERNIGHT RESPITE - 22%
- SERVICE & MATERIALS - 7%
- BUILDING & FACILITIES MAINTENANCE - 2%



# Donald and John Paul



Donald is using his communication tablet at the library with his support worker; he opens up an app and shows a video from his home. The house is decorated for the holidays, there are family members around the room, and there is 6 foot tall dancing Santa Clause in the corner. All of a sudden, it clicks, and this was the 'aha' moment for Donald's support worker.

Months before, Donald had been standing up, putting his hand out in front of him, pretending to press a button, and then dancing and laughing. No one had a clue what Donald was doing when he was trying to express this holiday memory.

Donald has been using a communication book for years. Starting with a wallet sized flip book, then a larger communication binder, and most recently his communication tablet. PBS LINK Coordinator, Cynthia, worked with Donald and his family to craft tailored communication tools to help him clearly share his thoughts and make the choices he wants.

Donald can use a communication device of his choosing and one that best fits his activities. Cynthia helped along the way, coaching him on how to use each of his tools in different situations, and worked with him to improve his sign language skills and use more widely recognized gestures. Donald has new nieces and nephews, and his tablet allows him to communicate with others about these central people in his life. Cynthia even assisted Donald by adding relevant photos and videos to his tablet, like the video of the dancing Santa. It was all starting to click for Donald. He's happier now too.

In the past, if you asked DDRC client John Paul about his day, he would reply, "I don't know". With stories and thoughts to share it wasn't that he didn't know, he just needed some support with how to express himself. Whether volunteering as a gardener at Bow View Manor or attending DDRC Client Voice Committee meetings, John Paul would mark it on his calendar. The calendar was helpful, and allowed John Paul to express what had happened, but not why it was important to him.

Cynthia worked with John Paul and his family to make a unique communication book. John Paul's book had interchangeable communication cards, detailing where he was, who he was working with, what he was doing, and the conversations he had. Cynthia describes her work as "linking clients to their lives".

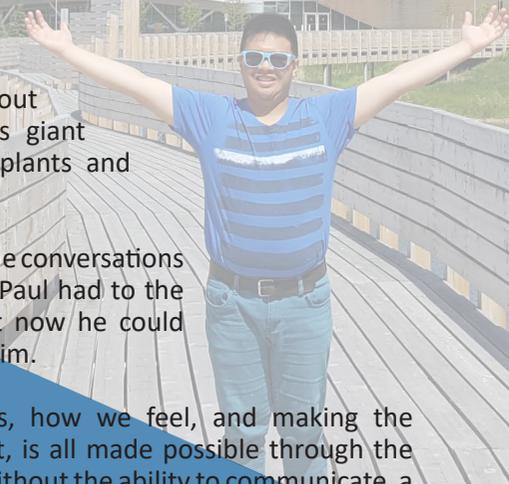
John Paul made the choice to visit the Rocky Ridge YMCA. Using his communication book, John Paul was able to ask YMCA staff about 'Fair Entry' application and passes. He also discovered the rock-climbing wall, skating rinks, pools, and the small Calgary Library location inside. DDRC support workers began to learn more about John Paul's personality, sense of humour, and diligent work attitude. He was able to share with others his interests about gardening, animals, that he is a burger lover, and a big Toronto Maple Leaf fan.

A green thumb, he chose to visit local community gardens and stores where gardeners shop. At the Botanical Gardens of Silver Springs, he learned all about the different plants there; including the poisonous giant hogweed. John Paul photographed the dangerous plants and shared the info with the people he works with.

John Paul started to use multiple tools to add detail to the conversations that his communication book had helped start. John Paul had to the tools and skills to say what, when, and who, but now he could explain why and how it was important to him.



Expressing ourselves, how we feel, and making the choices we want, is all made possible through the conversation. Without the ability to communicate, a void is left. But, tools and strategies allowed Donald and John Paul to bridge that gap. Calling up a friend, sharing a story about your weekend or vacation, we might take our ability to express ourselves for granted. For Donald and John Paul, their families, friends, coworkers, and communities, finding that voice has been life changing.



## Phung

Phung steps off the bus, venturing into her community on a cold winter day. The conditions would keep most people inside. It's not that Phung is toughing it out. She's prepared and has a smile on her face - bundled up, Phung is ready to experience new things and see new places.

Often, we are not sure of our passions and interests. We try new things on the suggestion of a friend, family member, or mentor. A curiosity for something new, seeing someone enjoying an activity with a big smile on their face, it's not always clear what motivates us to 'give it a go'.

Phung's 'give it a go' attitude has seen her shaking it up at a Zumba class, learning about personal saving and money management, attending an ESL class, working on art projects in differing mediums, and increasing her mastery of technology. Phung brought effort to each new experience, but often discarding the products of her focus and energy. Subtle but clear, if her interest waned it was time to move onto something new and keep narrowing down where her passions lie.

Phung started to gravitate towards the sewing and knitting sections of the stores she visited. Then, Phung joined a community knitting group. She crafted pot holders, baby chicks for Easter holiday, small coin purses, and knitted squares to rest a tea cup on. Picking the right feeling yarn, the best color, and a design that interested her, Phung had a growing energy for her new hobby. Proud of herself, she was able to hold her creations and share them with others, particularly the new friends she was making at the knitting group. Another member, also fluent in Cantonese would converse with her, and Phung's arrival each day brought smiles to the faces of the group. Providing connection and conversation, the group often celebrating special occasions together and Phung was enjoying every minute. Her social circle and confidence had grown.



Then, her knitting group started to meet on a different weekday. Phung was unable to attend. She'd work on new knitting projects alone, but she wasn't too attached to them and often left them behind once completed. Phung was missing the group dynamic of the knitting club, the conversations, and the meaning and identity that it brought to her. Her support workers continued to encourage her but the routine of using the same technique became stagnant.

Phung saw someone 'finger lopping', a knitting technique that she'd never seen before. Phung dove in and learned from videos and guides online and in books. The new technique was challenging at first, but Phung pushed on. Her support workers noticed that she was getting more skilled with her hands in activities beyond knitting. Gaining confidence in the new technique, she began selecting different types of yarn, different colors. She had a new project in mind and those around her continued to encourage her drive.

Phung began making a scarf and matching winter hat. Stepping out of the bus to go explore the community, she wears the products of her hard work and creativity. She's talking to people, showing them what she made. She's proud that her hard work keeps her warm on a cold winters day. Phung is once again building more confidence and increasing her social circle, striking out to make connections beyond what the knitting group offered her before.

Confirming the hobbies we do not gravitate towards is a process Phung, and each of us, goes through. This can be uncomfortable or discouraging when we are trying to find our place and passion, but it allows us to better understand our own preferences. The energy needed for a new hobby might not be present, we might discard the small projects we create, and scrap them to move onto something new and hope it energizes us. Once Phung found it, her hobby became part of her personal development that she could wear proudly on her sleeve, a warm hat and scarf she could wear on cold days. But it is so much more. These activities can give us meaning, identity, and a community, just as they did for Phung.

## DDRC Highlights of the Year

Implemented ShareVision, an information program to track client progress. More than 100 DDRC employees use ShareVision to have up to the minute information to provide tailored supports for DDRC clients

40 families received Triple P parenting program; 52% reported improvements in parent related anxiety

Partnered with government agencies to provide feedback and guidance on accessibility, hiring individuals with developmental disabilities, and creating inclusive workplaces

LINK - 7 families received communication devices, 20 clients with tailored communication support plans, and 20+ clients & 35 DDRC staff participated in American Sign Language (ASL) workshops

Launched the WING workshop, created by the Positive Behaviour Supports (PBS) team, which combines mental health, suicide prevention, trauma-informed care, and harm reduction for effective support of complex needs

Nominated for an Organizational Diversity Award through Immigrant Services Calgary, for leadership in embracing and promoting inclusive and welcoming diverse workforce

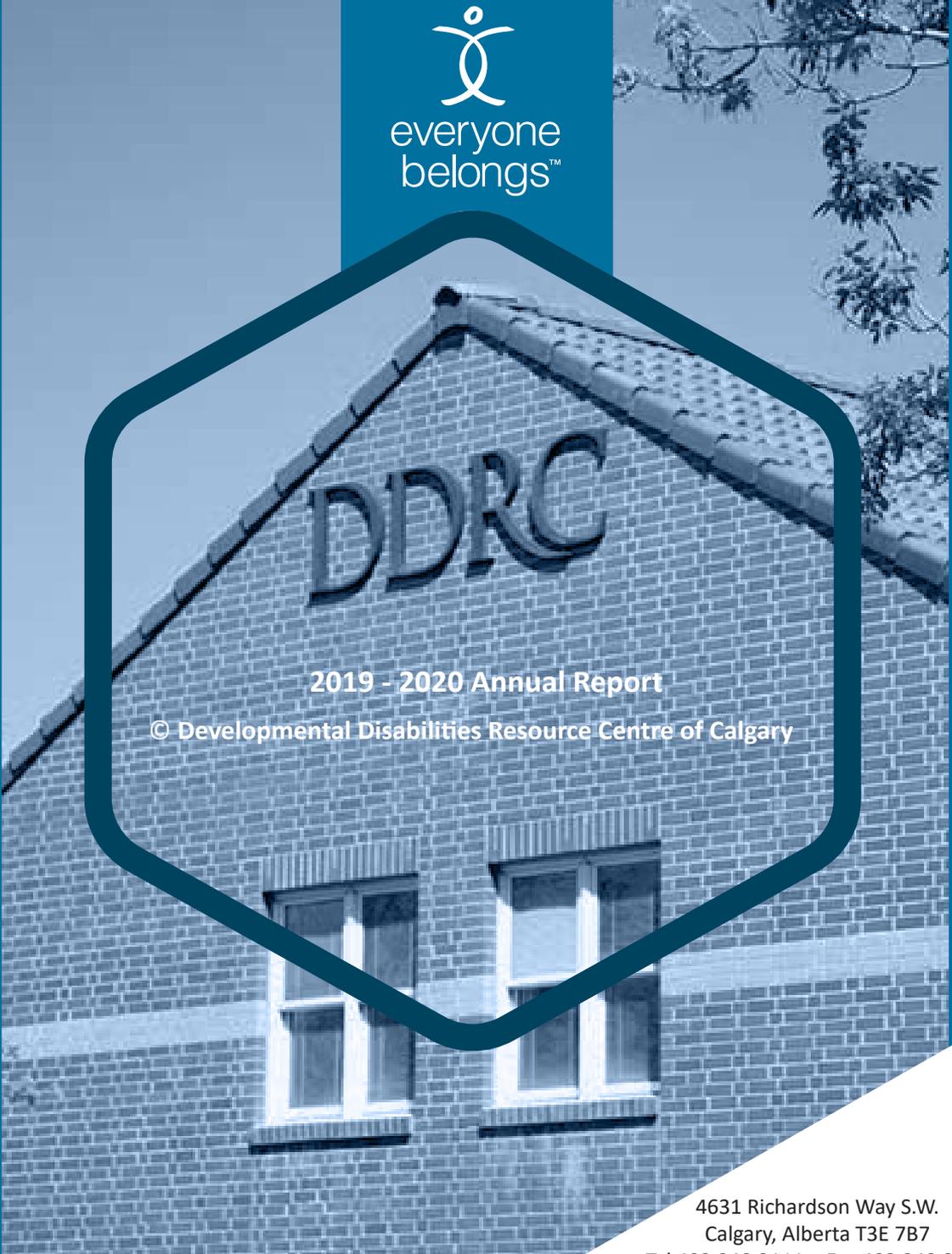
Opened an additional client computer lab, with five stations for client learning, job searches, goal exploration

1720 training workshops and courses completed by DDRC staff over the fiscal year

Participated in a Diversity Leadership program with Anthony & Holmes Consulting through a grant from the Government of Alberta. The grant provides funding for the Equipping and Advancing a Culturally Diverse Workforce project, which includes mentorship, comprehensive research, and identification of organizational and individual barriers preventing newcomers to Canada from advancing



everyone  
belongs™



DDRC

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