

**Community Investment Partnership
Project Ideas
Spring 2010**

The examples below are a small sample of some timely projects that address community priorities in Edmonton. To support one of these projects, to find out more, or to get suggestions about other programs in our community, contact Craig Stumpf-Allen, Director of Special Funds, at:

Phone: 780-426-0015, ext. 111

E-mail: craig@ecfoundation.org

Issue: Community Safety / High Risk Youth

Agency: iHuman Youth Society

Project: Edmonton Urban Games

The iHuman Youth Society works with high-risk youth and promotes their re-integration into the community through a program involving crisis intervention, arts mentorship, and life skills development programs. Many of these youths are working or living on the streets and many struggle with drug addiction and unassessed mental health issues. These issues take time and support to resolve; the average time a youth stays in an iHuman program is three years. During that time, iHuman gets kids off the streets and into arts-based programs which lead them to heal and discover their own identity. Simultaneously, iHuman gives the youth support and guidance while they transition to independent living and steady employment.

The Urban Games is an effort to address the growing youth gang issue by engaging high risk youth in an event to showcase their talents, connecting these youth with healthy adults, and helping them develop economically viable options for themselves. The Urban Games projects include an Urban Life Resource Storyboard, an Identity Crisis Art Project, an Urban Fashion Show, and other artistic and cultural elements. The partners also hope to develop a bursary program to encourage participants to pursue post-secondary education or training. Other funders and partners include Justice Canada, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Catholic Social Services, Edmonton John Howard Society, and the Solicitor General Young Offender Branch.

Issue: Environment

Agency: Edmonton and Area Land Trust

Project: Front end costs for land donations

The Edmonton & Area Land Trust is dedicated to conserving the natural heritage of the region through private stewardship. They envision an Edmonton region where natural area systems are valued, preserved for future generations and play a key role in the social, economic and environmental life of the area residents. EALT works to protect land permanently through land acquisition through purchase or donation, conservation easements, and education and stewardship.

EALT has recently been in conversation with a land owner about a potential donation of 120 acres near the Glory Hills in Parkland County. Besides the substantial area, the gift is significant because it is on the transition between boreal forest and parkland. There is development occurring in adjacent areas and the land itself is slated for subdivision. However, to complete the donation and protection of the land, there are a number of front end costs which must be addressed, including a fair market value assessment, legal fees, property taxes, insurance and ecological and environmental assessments. There is also a need to establish an endowment for each property to steward the lands in perpetuity.

Issue: Education / Non-Profit Sector
Agency: Edmonton Community Foundation
Project: Community Scholarships

Edmonton Community Foundation established the Community Scholarship Program in 2009 to provide educational opportunities to students with financial need and a history of community involvement, while also addressing the human resource challenges faced by the non-profit sector. One goal of the program is to support skills development for individuals involved in community work, making it a unique opportunity in Edmonton. Those working in the non-profit and charitable sector are underpaid relative to those in other sectors, making skills enhancement and post-secondary training difficult to afford, both for the individuals and the organizations. Staff in the sector are often required to fill many roles but may not have all of the skills needed to do all the work that is required. To address personnel and skills shortages in the non-profit sector, ECF hopes to provide more Community Scholarships in 2010 with support of other donors.

Issue: Arts / Education / Children / Low Income Communities
Agency: E4C
Project: Art Start

E4C responds to the needs of disadvantaged people through program delivery, coordination, and advocacy in partnership with other individuals and organizations in order to create healthier communities for all. Its programs include the school lunch program, headstart learning programs, housing and transitional services, and Kids in the Hall Bistro (a social enterprise which provides inner city youth who face multiple barriers to education and employment with concrete employment skills and life skills).

Art Start began in 2002 with the goal of helping children from low-income families gain access to high quality arts instruction, including visual art, dance, drama, music and multi-disciplinary arts. All Art Start programs are provided free of charge. During the school year, programs run at Delton and Parkdale schools. This summer, Art Start will partner with the City Centre Education Program (CCEP) to provide arts programming as part of the CCEP summer day camp; CCEP is an innovative collaboration that brings together schools and community based services across nine of Edmonton's downtown core communities. Assistance is required with program staff and supply costs related to the summer program, as well as with ongoing costs such as maintenance and repair of instruments and costumes.

Issue: Environment / Education / Children
Agency: Personal Community Support Association
Project: Little Green Thumbs

Personal Community Support Association runs a trio of unique environmental programs in Edmonton: City Farm (a unique venue to learn about growing food, animal care and the natural world), the Community Garden Network (which connects the 30 or so gardens in the Edmonton area for sharing of information and resources) and Little Green Thumbs.

Little Green Thumbs is a program to engage students in learning and caring about plants and the environment that sustain us. Hands-on, experiential learning gives children a direct and personal understanding of how living things thrive. Little Green Thumbs provides Edmonton schools or agencies with indoor gardens and support, such as classroom sessions, technical and horticultural advice and program resources. In 2010, six new indoor gardens are sprouting and growing in Edmonton schools and agencies with the help of enthusiastic volunteers. Support is needed for equipment (boxes, lights), supplies (soil, fertilizer, seeds) and staff costs.