VITAL SIGNS

WHAT IS VITAL SIGNS?

Edmonton Vital Signs is an annual check-up conducted by Edmonton Community Foundation, in partnership with the Edmonton Social Planning Council, to measure how our community is doing with a focus on a specific topic; this year we are looking at Edmonton’s Urban Aboriginal population. Community foundations across Canada are reporting on how their communities are doing and how Canada is doing over all. See page 2 for the definitions this report uses when referring to the term Aboriginal.

WHO ARE WE?

Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) is the fourth largest community foundation in Canada and the largest non-governmental funder in Edmonton. We help stimulate change and community growth by working with donors to grant in the following areas: community and social services; arts, culture and heritage; health and wellness; education and learning; environment; and recreation and leisure.

Edmonton Social Planning Council (ESPC) is an independent, non-profit, non-partisan, social research organization. Established in 1940, ESPC conducts research and analysis into a wide range of topics, particularly in the areas of low income and poverty. The council’s publications and reports provide the public and government with current and accurate information to support informed decision making.

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Amakwiyi Academy - Vice Principal

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City of Edmonton, Aboriginal and Multicultural Relations

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JOHN KOLKMAN
ESPC Research Coordinator

SUSAN MORRISSEY
ESPC, Co-Chair

CAROL WATSON
ECF, Co-Chair

ALBERTA POPULATION
3,567,980

ABORIGINAL POPULATION
220,695

ALEXANDER BAND
1,078

1,350

ENOCH BAND
1,630

EDMONTON
1,328,290

Aboriginal population
61,765

5.4% of Edmonton’s population

Unless otherwise stated, “EDMONTON” refers to metro Edmonton or Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) which are interchangeable terms. This includes the city of Edmonton, the city of St. Albert, Parkland County, Strathcona County (including the hamlet of Sherwood Park), Sturgeon County, Leduc County, and all incorporated urban centres and First Nations located within the boundaries of those counties.

CANADA
32,852,325
Aboriginal population
1,400,685

Sources for these statistics are available at ecfoundation.org
EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT’S MOST UNIQUE LEARNING EXPERIENCE is its home Blackfoot Nation territory. The airport that was once the first licensed airport in Canada (1907) now houses another of Canada’s firsts – a high school focused in Aboriginal culture.

Transformation of the former airport terminal includes Aboriginal culture and language, while also providing a learning environment that truly embraces Edmonton’s Aboriginal students right in their heart. Principal Fred Jakes calls it “a gift.”

The school is located on the Blackfoot Nation territory, in addition to the traditional classrooms you would find at any of Edmonton’s public schools, the building is designed in collaboration with elders and educators to create a unique learning environment. The school is located on the Blackfoot Nation territory.

AMISKWACY ACADEMY

STORY BY ELIZABETH BONNIK

AMISKWACY ACADEMY is the first fully accredited university-level post-secondary Aboriginal school in Canada. The school offers four semesters each instead of the traditional two, many of the students start the school year late or leave for work or family commitments. The program is designed to be flexible. It is a different model but it contributes to their livelihood and helps their home life,” says Jakes. The modified school year allows them to gain credits. This fact makes it difficult to say exactly how many students attend the school. “We deal with movement and neglect. The school has between 180 and 290 students, we could compile the 250 mark at any one time. Some come here as a starter and then get called back to work on another program, others return as a student,” says Jakes.

According to the Edmonton Public School Board’s data, the percentage of self-identified Aboriginal students who completed high school within three years of entering Grade 12 in 2007-2009 was 32%. This was down to 29% in 2013 across the district. Jakes says, “amiskwacy is a very good model to be explored. They graduated with a standardized and have cultural links.”

The school, open to all students, has a student from Metis Nation. England entered in the past year. “I read about our school online and wanted to attend in order to learn about indigenous culture,” says Harris. That was our school’s first non-Aboriginal student. Harris says the school is looking to hire a director who wants to be able to attend the school. “We want community involvement and invite them in.”

• CONTRIBUTE TO ONE OF THE MANY SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS at Edmonton Community Foundation that support students who are interested in pursuing a degree in education and work to support the needs of students in this community.

• VOLUNTEER at amiskwacy Academy. Please contact Lauren Sorensen at amiskwacyacademy@gmail.com

• LEARN MORE about the Indian residential school history in Alberta and their lasting effects.
Edmonton is located in the geographical centre of the Alberta province of Canada and is the largest city in the province. Edmonton is home to many festivals and cultural events. It is also home to the Edmonton Folk Music Festival, which is one of the largest folk festivals in North America. Edmonton is also home to the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra and the Edmonton Opera. The city is also home to the Edmonton Oilers, one of the most successful teams in the NHL.

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**ATTITUDES & FEELINGS DATA ABOUT ABORIGINAL EDMONTONIANS**

**SIX LOCAL ABORIGINAL PEOPLE WERE ASKED HOW THEIR CULTURE SHAPED WHO THEY ARE TODAY. HERE IS WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY.**

**NAIM CARDINAL**

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**FEATHER DANCE**

---

**JEFF CHALKO**

---

**REBECCA GREEN**

---

**SUSAN RAWLING**

---

**DAWN MORRIS**

---

**APTN Reporter**

---

**CONSTANCE LAMLO**

---

**JOHN COMEAU**

---

**ALISON BELOUS**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE HISTORY OF TREATY 6 AND THE HISTORY OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN EDMONTON, PLEASE VISIT THE CITY OF EDMONTON WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES.**
CULTURE
EMBRACING EDMONTON’S ABORIGINAL CULTURE
HERE ARE SOME OF THE WAYS YOU CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT EDMONTON’S ABORIGINAL POPULATION:
1. VISIT A PROUD HERITAGE TRAIL THROUGH THE YEAR-
   LONG FEATURES ABORIGINAL ARTISTS THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER.
2. SEARCH OUT THE 土 ROUND TRIP TO THE ALBERTA MUSEUM. ALBERTA WAS HOME TO-
   MORE THAN 150,000 ABORIGINAL PEOPLES IN THE 19TH CENTURY.
3. VISIT THE HISTORICAL SITE OF THE EDMONTON INDIAN RESERVATION RANGING FROM THE 19TH-
   TO THE 20TH CENTURY.
4. SEEK OUT AND PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITIES DURING MÉTIS WEEK IN MARCH AND NOVEMBER.
   THE CITY OF EDMONTON OFFERS A VARIETY OF PROGRAMS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.
5. JOIN THE NAGEL INDIAN RESERVATION EVENTS IN JUNE AND JULY.
6. APPRECIATE ABORIGINAL ART BY ATTENDING THE BORISIUS ARTS CENTER.
7. VISIT THE LEE BIRD ART GALLERY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT INDIGENOUS ART.
8. CHECK OUT EDMONTON PUBLIC LIBRARY’S INDIGENOUS CULTURAL PRO南瓜.
9. PARTICIPATE IN ABORIGINAL AWARENESS TRAINING.
   THERE ARE MANY PROGRAMS AVAILABLE.
10. LOOK UP THE RECONCILIATION COMMISSION’S RECOMMENDATIONS.

ABORIGINAL LIFE IN EDMONTON
HOMELESSNESS
The October 2014 Homeless Count revealed an alarmingly high proportion of Aboriginal homeless people in Edmonton. According to the count, 46% of the homeless population were Aboriginal, significantly higher than the national average of 36%. This proportion is particularly concerning given the historical and ongoing systemic challenges faced by the Aboriginal community. The high rate of homelessness among Aboriginal people highlights the importance of supporting initiatives that address housing, employment, and mental health issues.

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT
In 2012, 72% of off-reserve First Nations people who had completed high school were employed, while only 64% of those who had not completed high school were employed. This highlights the critical role education plays in improving employment rates. In Edmonton, 57% of Aboriginal adults have a university degree or higher, which is above the national average of 41%.

ABORIGINAL ECONOMY
In 2010, the median income for Aboriginal people in Edmonton was $69,782, which is 13.9% less than the median for all Edmonton households. The income composition of Aboriginal population is significantly impacted by factors such as employment, education, and government benefits. Despite these challenges, the Aboriginal community is actively engaged in economic development projects, contributing to the local economy.

VITAL ACTIONS
- DONATE TO ONE OF THE MANY SOCIAL ENTERPRISE FUNDS TO ENCOURAGE SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENTS.
- SEEK OUT AND READ THE MAYOR’S TASK FORCE REPORT “END POVERTY IN A GENERATION”.
- TAKE A MOMENT AND THINK ABOUT HOW MUCH ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT IS CONTRIBUTING TO OUR TAX DOLLARS.
IN 2014 Edmonton passed Ottawa–Gatineau to become the urban area with the 4th highest population in Canada, after Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Calgary.

EDMONTON POPULATION
2014 1,328,290
2004 1,017,054
Edmonton’s population increased by 20% over these 10 years. This rate of growth trumps only Calgary.

NEW CANADIANS
EDMONTON IS 5TH AMONG CANADIAN URBAN CENTRES IN THE NUMBER OF NEW CANADIANS SETTLING HERE.

The proportion of immigrants and refugees who made Edmonton their permanent home has grown from 2% to 6% of the national total in the past decade.

5,057 settled here in 2004
15,465 settled here in 2014

NUMBER OF PERSONS BY FAMILY TYPE
CITY OF EDMONTON
Between 2001 and 2011, the number of persons in all family types has increased reflecting Edmonton’s growth during the decade. The percentage share of Edmonton’s population that comprises common-law parents, male lone parents and single adults has increased, while the percentage share of persons in married couples, female lone parents, and children in families has decreased.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS</th>
<th>MARRIRED COUPLES</th>
<th>COMMON-LAW PARTNERS</th>
<th>MALE LONE PARENTS</th>
<th>FEMALE LONE PARENTS</th>
<th>CHILDREN IN FAMILIES</th>
<th>ADULTS SINGLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>655,680</td>
<td>246,260</td>
<td>42,610</td>
<td>5,825</td>
<td>26,695</td>
<td>205,205</td>
<td>129,085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>795,760</td>
<td>293,900</td>
<td>59,060</td>
<td>8,035</td>
<td>30,045</td>
<td>234,140</td>
<td>170,490</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LIVING IN EDMONTON

LIVING IN EDMONTON

LIVING WAGE PER HOUR
$19.33 $19.33 $17.36 $17.56

MEDIAN AFTER-TAX FAMILY INCOME
EDMONTON’S MEDIAN AFTER-TAX FAMILY INCOME WAS $60,120 IN 2013, 26.2% HIGHER THAN THE $47,700 CANADIAN AVERAGE.
The impact of the recent slowdown has yet to show up in family income data. The Edmonton economy has performed well in recent years leading to strong income growth. Between 2001 and 2013, median after-tax income in Edmonton after CPI inflation has increased by 22.4%.

INCOME INEQUALITY IS GROWING
INCOME INEQUALITY IN EDMONTON IS GROWING IN LINE WITH PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL TRENDS.

BETWEEN 1992 AND 2012, THE BOTTOM 50% OF TAX Filers SAW A 3.3% MEDIAN INCREASE IN THEIR AFTER-TAX INCOMES (after inflation) compared to a 5% increase for the top 1% of tax filers, and a 137% increase in the top 0.1% of tax filers.

LOW INCOME
128,810 PERSONS OF ALL AGES LIVED IN LOW INCOME (POVERTY) IN EDMONTON IN 2013, OR 10.5% OF THE TOTAL POPULATION.
Children are more likely to live in poverty than adults. In 2013, 14.4% of children under the age of 18 years lived in poverty, or 15.2% of total children.

There has been a reduction in Edmonton poverty rates during the most recent ten year period for which data is available. The overall poverty rate fell from 12.6% in 2003 to 10.5% in 2013. The child poverty rate fell from 18.9% in 2003 to 12.2% in 2013.

ECONOMY

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE NUMBERS JUMP
THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVING REGULAR EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (EI) BENEFITS IN EDMONTON JUMPED FROM 10,230 IN JULY 2014 TO 17,170 IN JULY 2015, an increase of 67%. This jump is an early indicator of an economic slowdown as employers who have experienced voluntary job losses through lay-off or termination are eligible to receive EI benefits.

According to a 2015 UAlberta poll, Edmontonians expressing the opinion that there are adequate job opportunities fell to 69% in 2015 from 76% in 2014.

VITAL ACTIONS SOMETHING EACH OF US CAN DO TO FOSTER CHANGE IN OUR COMMUNITY.
- DONATE TO SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS that support single parents upgrading their education.
- VOLUNTEER OR PARTICIPATE IN SAUC’S MAKE-TAX-TIME project to assist low income families file their taxes and obtain refunds.
- CLEAN YOUR CLOSETS ONCE A YEAR AND DONATE CLOTHING you haven’t worn in a while to a charity that provides no-cost or low-cost clothing.

JOBS GROWTH SLOWING
The decline in energy prices is beginning to make itself felt in the job market. While Edmonton still managed to add 9,300 additional jobs between July 2014 and July 2015, this is slower than the pace of job growth in the previous 10 years. Edmonton’s unemployment rate increased by 0.7% in July 2015 compared to 0.4% in the same month one year earlier.
CORE HOUSING NEED
Households are in core housing need if they live in accommodation that is not adequate, suitable or affordable, and that more than 30% of their before-tax income on housing.
In 2011, 40,000 Edmonton households (11.3% of total households) were in core housing need. These households spent on average 51.1% of their before-tax income to pay for their housing.

ACCORDING TO A 2015 LEOSS POLL:
THE VAST MAJORITY OF EDMONTONIANS (92%) FEEL SAFE IN THEIR HOMES, WHILE A LESSER PROPORTION FEEL SAFE IN THEIR COMMUNITY (79%) AND IN EDMONTON (79%).

Edmonton is becoming a safer community with fewer crimes being reported to police. Adjusting for population growth, crime- related corrections have been on a sustainable trajectory for several decades. Between 2004 and 2014, crime- related corrections of all types have declined by 32.3% per capita in metro Edmonton.

Non-violent crimes such as property crimes, which account for 64% of all offenses reported, have decreased more than violent criminal code offenses. Crime reporting rates have also decreased by 2.7% in metro Edmonton between 2004 and 2014, compared to a 2.8% decline in violent crime nationally over the same time period.

EDMONTONIANS SAY THAT THEIR PRIMARY MODE OF TRANSPORTATION IS BY CAR (80%) EITHER AS THE DRIVER (71%) OR THE PASSENGER (9%).

IN 2011, THE PUBLIC TRANSIT COMMUTING SHARE WAS AS FOLLOWS:
TORONTO: 23%
VANCOUVER: 20%
CALGARY: 15%
EDMONTON: 11%

Edmonton’s lower public transit share (compared to Calgary) is likely due to two main factors: a lower proportion of people working downtown, and a less extensive light rail transit system.

SELF-REPORTED HEALTH STATUS (2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANADIANS REPORTED</th>
<th>EDMONTONIANS REPORTED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VERY GOOD OR EXCELLENT HEALTH</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAIR OR POOR HEALTH</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EDMONTONIANS ALSO REPORTED SOMEWHAT BETTER MENTAL HEALTH (2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CANADA REPORTED</th>
<th>EDMONTON REPORTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VERY GOOD OR EXCELLENT MENTAL HEALTH</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAIR OR POOR MENTAL HEALTH</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ECF VITAL Work
Boys & Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton & Area Society was granted $96,000 over 2 years to support a Male Outreach Support Worker & Club Program Facilitator. The facilitator will address the needs of boys, and, in particular, 7th grade boys, by increasing programming that encourages both active play and healthy peer relationships, and to recruit more male volunteers to be Big Brothers.

ACCORDING TO A 2015 LEOSS POLL:
7% VOLUNTEER AT YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY LEAGUE
6% WALK OR CYCLE INSTEAD OF DRIVE in your favourite neighbourhood activity.

HEALTHY EDMONTONIANS

CIGARETTE SMOKING IN SLOW DECLINE
Smoking among Edmonton women is declining faster (11.4% in 2001-2005 to 10.7% in 2013-2014) than among men (from 21.6% in 2001-2005 to 17.6% in 2013-2014).

Edmonton does have the second highest smoking rate among Canada’s six largest urban centres.

HEAVY DRINKING
Heavy drinking is defined by the World Health Organization and Health Canada, consuming 5 or more drinks per occasion, or 4 or more alcoholic drinks, on one occasion, at least once per month.

OVER the past two years, Edmonton has the second lowest heavy drinking rate of the six major Canadian centres. Men are more likely to be heavy drinkers than women. In 2013, 30% of men and 27% of women reported heavy drinking compared to 13.9% of women.

The average heavy drinking rate for 2013 and 2014 for those 15 years and older were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calgary</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmonton</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ECF VITAL Work
Bisel Centre was granted $330,000 over 2 years for the Community Bridge project that serves individuals and key agencies to fill support and solutions and small loan fund, which helps prevent homelessness, funding costs such as rent and utility arrears that may force eviction.

The Community Bridge Project was funded through 2007 to end homelessness in Edmonton, and the success of ‘rent bank’ is other communities.

35.5% of RENTER HOUSEHOLDS AND 5.8% OF OWNER HOUSEHOLD WERE IN CORE HOUSING NEED IN 2011.

PUBLIC TRANSIT USE

PUBLIC TRANSIT USE

35.5% of commuters in Edmonton took public transit as their main way of getting to and from work each day. This is a small improvement from the 7.9% who took public transit in 2006. Private vehicles saw only a slight reduction in their commuting share from 82% in 2006 to 81% in 2011.

Public transit usage is higher in the City of Edmonton compared to the surrounding area. In 2011, 14.8% of Edmontonians (or 44,537 people) took public transit as their main way of commuting to and from work. A total of 810,116 round-trip rides were taken on the Edmonton Transit System in the monthly period ending April 2011, an increase of 8.8% over the same 12 month period ten years earlier.

Of Canada’s six largest urban centres, Edmonton has the lowest proportion of people who commute using public transit.

78% OF EDMONTONIANS FEEL THAT IT IS EASIEST TO COMMIT IN EDMONTON BY CAR.

HEALTHY EDMONTONIANS

VITAL ACTIONS
SOMETHING EACH OF US CAN DO TO FOSTER CHANGE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

• DONATE TO A PROGRAM THAT SUPPORTS HEALTHY KIDS.
• VOLUNTEER AT YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY LEAGUE.
• WALK OR CYCLE INSTEAD OF DRIVE in your favourite neighbourhood activity.

IN 2011, 14.8% OF EDMONTONIANS TOOK PUBLIC TRANSIT AS THEIR MAIN WAY OF GETTING TO AND FROM WORK EACH DAY. THIS IS A SMALL IMPROVEMENT FROM THE 7.9% WHO TOOK PUBLIC TRANSIT IN 2006. PRIVATE VEHICLES SAW ONLY A SLIGHT REDUCTION IN THEIR COMMUTING SHARE FROM 82% IN 2006 TO 81% IN 2011.
FOOD SECURITY

ECF VITAL Work
THE HERITAGE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY WAS GRANTED $7,400 OVER 3 YEARS for their “Farm School” where students spend a week connecting their tables to local farmers and suppliers. Students learn about growing food and food production, lessons are tied into the school curriculum.

FOOD BANK USE RISING
Edmonton’s Food Bank served 43,811 different people from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015 through its food hamper program. A 7.9% increase from the number of people served a year earlier.

OF THIS TOTAL, 7,429 INDIVIDUALS WERE 15 TO 24 YEARS OF AGE, AN 18% INCREASE COMPARED TO A YEAR EARLIER.

ACCORDING TO A 2015 LIGER POLL:
60% OF EDMONTONIANS AGREE THAT POVERTY IS A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM IN EDMONTON AND ONLY 35% AGREE THAT ADEQUATE INITIATIVES ARE IN PLACE TO REDUCE POVERTY.

61.7% INCREASE IN COST OF EATING HEALTHY IN EDMONTON

LIVING IN EDMONTON

NEXT ELECTION
OCT. 19, 2015
GET OUT & VOTE!

Municipal Election
Oct 21, 2013
35.4%

Provincial Election
May 5, 2015
55.1%

Federal Election
Oct 19, 2015
56.7%

EDMONTON’S VOTING RECORD

VOTER TURNOUT

HALF OF ALL ALBERTANS ARE VOLUNTEERS

According to a City of Edmonton Citizen Perceptions Survey from October 2012, nearly 49% of Edmontonians participated in some form of volunteer activity in the past 12 months.

43.6% OF CANADIANS VOLUNTEERED A MEAN OF 53 HOURS IN A YEAR

ACCORDING TO A 2015 LIGER POLL:
FOUR IN FIVE (80%) EDMONTONIANS SAY THEY HAVE DONATED MONEY TO A CHARITY OR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

50.1% OF ALBERTANS VOLUNTEERED A MEDIAN OF 49 HOURS IN A YEAR

94% OF EDMONTONIANS VOLUNTEERED IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

CHARITABLE GIVING
207,340 INDIVIDUALS IN EDMONTON CONTRIBUTED $419.3 MILLION TO REGISTERED CHARITIES IN 2013.

Edmontonians are more generous than Canadians overall but slightly less generous than Calgarians.

Donations made in 2013:

23.3% OF EDMONTONIANS MEDIAN DONATION OF $390

21.9% OF CANADIANS MEDIAN DONATION OF $280

24.3% OF CALGARIANS MEDIAN DONATION OF $420

• DONATE TO THE EIGHT WAYS ASSOCIATION FUND at Edmonton Community Foundation to support your local food bank for many years to come. Contact 780-426-5010 and speak to a Devon Securities representative.

• DONATE FOOD OR YOUR TIME TO ASSIST THE FOOD BANK AND THE MANY DISTRIBUTION CENTRES.

• EXERCISE YOUR CIVIC POWER - GET OUT AND VOTE!

ECF VITAL Work
CIVIL, A NON-PARTISAN CHARITY THAT BUILDS SKILLS AND HABITS OF CITIZENSHIP AMONG YOUNG CANADIANS, WAS GRANTED $33,000 FOR A DEMOCRACY BOOT CAMP. The Bootcamp will act as a training and motivational event for teachers to present “Student Vote / Team Leader” in preparation for the 2015 federal election. Student Vote is a parallel election for students under the voting age that coincides with official elections to give students a real-time democratic experience.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
FACING OUR PAST
In March of 2014 Edmonton was host to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s final national event, a step towards acknowledging and correcting the wrongs of our history.
EDMONTON STEPPED UP TO FACE THE LEGACY OF COLONIALISM AND RACISM AND TO BEGIN THE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN ABORIGINAL AND NON-ABORIGINAL PEOPLE. Indian Residential Schools (IRS) are a part of our shared history that is not well understood by many. Canada’s relationship with Aboriginal people has suffered as a result of the IRS system. Healing and repairing that relationship will come from application, awareness, and increased understanding of the legacy and the impact the IRS has had on our society and the lives of those affected.

EDMONTON IS A TRIP
Natural Geographical sites Edmonton as one of the “BEST SUMMER TRIPS OF 2015“ putting it in the same list as Mackinac Island, Athens, and UNESCO World Heritage site, Jeju Island in South Korea. The city hosts long, hot days, and the river valley help it make the list.

PINK PROVINCIAL POWER
THE NUMBER OF FEMALE MICS IN THE EDMONTON AREA DOUBLED IN THE LAST PROVINCIAL ELECTION. 12 female representatives were elected (up from six) out of the 26 possible seats. Unfortunately on a local level the female representation reduced to only a single seat on Edmonton City Council is the October 2013 election.

RIBBON OF GREEN
According to the City of Edmonton website and the Edmonton Environment report that Edmonton has over 440 parks. The 440 kilometers (500 hectares) stretch of the North Saskatchewan River Valley has 22 major parks. It is the largest expanse of urban parkland in North America.

ONE TRUCK MIND
Edmonton continues to be a truck-driven town. Only 11.3% of commuters in Edmonton use public transit as their main mode of getting to and from work. Each day an average of 1.7 million trucks are parked in our busy city. Edmonton has the lowest proportion of the population who commute using public transit. We fall behind Toronto (23.3%), Montreal (22.9%), Ottawa (20.1%), Vancouver (19.7%), and even Calgary (15.4%).

NOT A GREAT PLACE TO BE A WOMAN
According to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives’ report on “The Best and Worst Places to Be a Woman in Canada 2015”, Edmonton ranked 24 out of 25, only slightly better than Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge.

The report cites that the gap in employment levels is among the largest of the 35 cities studied with 73% of men and 56% of women holding jobs. WOMEN EARN 59% ON THE MALE DOLLAR IN EDMONTON DESPITE THE FACT THAT WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY THAN MEN TO HAVE COMPLETED COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY. Men see three times as likely a women to have completed trades training and apprenticeships.

SATISFACTION, STRESS, SENSE OF BELONGING
In 2013, 93% of Edmonton residents report being satisfied or very satisfied with their lives. 64.2% reported a somewhat strong or very strong sense of belonging than that the average for all urban areas.

These percentages do not fluctuate much from year to year, and are not significantly different from the national average from those in other major urban centres.

ALBERTA BEEF
SIX OUT OF TEN PEOPLE IN ALBERTA ARE OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE according to the Health Quality Council of Alberta. In fact, we are 3.7% heavier than the national average. With the rise in obesity there have been many health issues such as diabetes this is a concern that must be dealt with in our health care system. Maybe we should all take advantage of our excellent river valley trail system and hop on a bike ride or go for a jog.

ALBERTA NATIONAL PARKS ARE TOPS IN CANADA
Alberta had more visitors (3.3 million) to its national parks and national historic sites than any other Canadian province in 2013. Visitors to national parks and historic sites are in decline, however. The number of visitors to Alberta national parks and national historic sites peaked at 7.9 million in 1999.

RENTER’S REGRET
EDMONTON IS ONE OF THE LEAST AFFORDABLE RENTAL MARKETS IN THE COUNTRY. The average two-bedroom apartment in Edmonton is $1,200 per month. This is 3.1% above the average for all Canada’s metropolitan areas. The average two-bedroom apartment in Edmonton will run you $1,200 – trading only Vancouver ($1,365), Calgary ($1,319), and Toronto ($1,365).

SOCIAL
ACCORDING TO A 2015 LIEBER POLL:
ABOUT TWO-THIRDS (66%) OF EDMONTONIANS FEEL THAT THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE IS VERY GOOD OR EXCELLENT.
EDMONTONIANS ARE MOST LIKELY TO AGREE THAT EDMONTON IS A CULTURALLY DIVERSE CITY (91%), AGREE THAT THERE ARE ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENJOY RECREATION IN EDMONTON, AND AGREE THAT EDMONTON IS A CITY THAT VALUES THE ARTS (91%).

EDMONTONIANS LOVE THEIR PUBLIC LIBRARY
In 2012, the Edmonton Public averaged 6 visits per person compared to Calgary’s 5.1 visits per person. 54.3% of Edmontonians were registered borrowers or active users of the public library in 2012, compared to 28.5% of Calgarians.

VITAL ACTIONS
SOMETHING EACH OF US CAN DO TO FIGHT CHANGE IN OUR COMMUNITY.
• DONATE TO ONE OF THE MANY FUNDS AT EDMONTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION THAT SUPPORT YOUR FAVOURITE FESTIVAL, FARE in Edmonton.
• VOLUNTEER AT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY. Go to www.ewl.ca/volunteer to find out how.
• BE PROUD OF OUR SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS COMMUNITY.