



Report to the Community 2022


Deeply rooted in *community*

Noted for its strong yet flexible wood, **carya** is a type of tree commonly known as hickory. And like a hickory tree, **carya** has deep roots.

Embedded in Calgary since 1910, **carya** has been cultivated and shaped by the evolving needs of our community. As one of the Calgary's oldest social impact agencies, **carya** supports thousands of individuals and families each year through a comprehensive offering of low-barrier programs and services.

While 2022 brought both challenges and opportunities, **carya**'s deep roots held us steadfast in our commitment to serving Calgarians when and where they need us most.

carya is here.



In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge the traditional territories and oral practices of the Blackfoot, the Tsuut'ina, the Stoney Nakoda First Nations, the Métis Nation Region 3, and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta. We also respectfully acknowledge that the province of Alberta is comprised of Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 territory, the traditional lands of First Nations and Métis peoples.



A Message from the CEO

As I reflect on the past year, it is evident to me that we have had remarkable accomplishments and significant challenges. It is also evident to me that our commitment and dedication to serving our community has never wavered and **carya** remains deeply rooted in our work.

In 2022, **carya** positively impacted the lives of thousands of individuals and families in Calgary. We provided crucial support to those in need, empowering them to overcome adversity and build strong foundations for their futures. From counselling and mental health services to family support and older adult initiatives, our team tirelessly worked towards fostering resilience and well-being throughout our community.

There is no doubt that meeting the unprecedented needs of our community tested our adaptability and capacity. However, through our determination and the unwavering support of our dedicated team, we navigated these challenges with the utmost commitment and compassion and have emerged stronger, armed with valuable insights that will help us to serve our community even better in the future.

As we move forward, we recognize the emerging needs within the community of Calgary. From the pressing concerns surrounding mental health and well-being to the growing needs of our aging population, our focus remains steadfast on understanding and meeting these evolving needs. We will continue to collaborate with community partners, stakeholders, and individuals to develop innovative solutions that will have a lasting impact.

Our accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedication of our remarkable team. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every member of team **carya** who tirelessly served the community, demonstrating compassion, professionalism, and a genuine desire to make a difference.

Looking ahead, our vision for **carya** is clear. We are committed to continuously improving and expanding our services and enhancing our ability to meet emerging needs. We will strive to be at the forefront of positive change, advocating for the well-being of every individual in Calgary.

Together we can create a community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paula Telfer', written in a fluid, cursive style.

Paula Telfer

Chief Executive Officer, carya

Shaped by Community

As leaders in the social sector, **carya** walks alongside our community to deliver high-quality evidence-based programs and services that meet the unique needs of our city.

Our mission of 'engaging individuals, families, and communities to realize their potential' is achieved through our tireless work in the following four focus areas:



Mental Health

Through best practice counselling programs and positive psychology groups, carya works to address mental health needs of individuals in the Calgary community, and to improve mental health and resiliency.

Family Functioning

By connecting families with evidence-based therapies and counselling programs, along with community-based opportunities for self-development, carya builds confidence and improves cohesion and functionality which strengthens the entire family.

Living Conditions

From facilitating access to resources to enhancing financial literacy, carya walks alongside vulnerable individuals as they navigate systems and services to enhance their living conditions and quality of life.

Social Connection

From multiple locations across Calgary, carya creates optimal conditions for connection by providing registered, drop-in, and community-led programs and initiatives that reduce social isolation and increase sense of belonging.



This work propels **carya** towards *our vision* of 'creating strong families and communities for generations'.

carya is *here*

carya is here for Calgarians when and where they need us most. For Dixon, this meant helping him navigate what felt like a hopeless situation.

Dixon, an immigrant who had moved to Calgary several years ago, contacted **carya** through The Way In Network, a collaboration of Calgary-based agencies offering seniors supports, hoping he may be able to find help. Dixon had been laid off from his job and found himself living in an unsustainable housing situation. He was no longer able to pay his rent and was given an eviction notice. Dixon was very worried and had no money for food or medication and was struggling to seek emergency funding or pensions due to language limitations.

Once **carya** understood his circumstances, a plan of action was developed for Dixon. Emergency food assistance from the **carya** pantry program provided him with food while hamper requests were made to the Food Bank. **carya**'s small crisis fund provided money for a few transit tickets and **carya**'s outreach worker helped him to apply for a low-income transit pass. Assistance was provided to help Dixon access emergency medication coverage and he was registered for Blue Cross for health coverage. Through advocacy and persistence, the eviction was delayed until Dixon could find suitable housing.

carya's tax program volunteers completed and filed several years of returns for Dixon, allowing him to access all appropriate federal and provincial pensions and benefits. While these applications were being processed, **carya** helped Dixon apply for monthly income support through Alberta Works. A few weeks later, all his pensions were approved, which provided Dixon with some much-needed financial stability.

Programs like The Way In can be truly life-changing and allow **carya** to wrap a continuum of support around vulnerable Calgary seniors and their families.

Today, *Dixon is thriving.*

He now lives in subsidized and sustainable housing, has made many connections and friendships, and no longer needs crisis supports. He has even saved enough money to visit his family back home and is actively engaging in his community.



70% of clients who felt their lives had been impacted by The Way In Network said that they would be more stressed and anxious without the support.

Priorities & Progress

From skyrocketing inflation to the lasting impacts of the pandemic, there was no shortage of stressors for members of our community in 2022. Below are examples of how **carya** addressed the emerging needs of individuals and families in the city of Calgary.

Community Need	carya's Response	Impact
<p>Over 40% of Calgarians are worried about not having enough money for housing.</p> <p>Poverty rates are expected to rise as pandemic benefits come to an end and cost of living continues to increase.</p>	<p>Using a community development and strengths-based approach, carya worked to engage people of all ages in conversations about financial well-being. A range of financial empowerment strategies were offered including financial literacy workshops, financial coaching, saving circles, and tax clinics.</p>	<p>As a partner in Aspire Calgary, a collaboration with 30 partner agencies, carya contributed to empowering 10,000 participants through the reduction of debt, growth in savings, and building of assets.</p>
<p>1 in 4 seniors live with a mental health problem or illness such as depression or anxiety.</p> <p>Up to 15% of adults 65 years or older living in the community suffer from depression.</p>	<p>carya's Older Adult Counselling program enhanced the mental well-being of seniors by helping those experiencing difficulty learn how to manage and overcome obstacles. Through services designed to navigate emotions related to aging, dealing with grief and loss, and by supporting those struggling to cope with tough situations, carya assisted hundreds of older adults in building resilience and developing positive emotions about aging.</p>	<p>Approximately 40% of older adults who received counselling at carya became more involved in their neighbourhoods suggesting a bi-directional relationship where improvements in depression and anxiety allowed them to engage in their community, which improved their emotional well-being.</p>
<p>1 in 3 Calgarians do not feel as though they belong in their community.</p> <p>Research shows that loneliness and social isolation are associated with increased risk of cancer, reduced life span, and a wide range of physical and mental health challenges.</p>	<p>Leveraging food, art, wellness, social and educational activities, carya offered a spectrum of opportunities for participants using an asset-based community development approach that provided multiple "soft entry points" to connecting, engaging and investing in the community. Opportunities were co-developed with residents to respond to the evolving community needs.</p>	<p>91% of participants from a variety of social connection programs reported having supportive relationships and are connected to each other and their community.</p> <p>14,068 visits to the Village Commons Community Hub occurred in 2022.</p>
<p>The pandemic heightened parental stress, increased social isolation, and increased the need for connections and support for families.</p>	<p>By offering a continuum of family strengthening strategies that enhanced knowledge of parenting, child development, parental resilience, emotional competence, and building natural supports, carya helped families to learn new ways to engage and manage stressors, while creating environments most conducive to healthy development for families and children of all ages.</p>	<p>Data from Family Counselling revealed significant improvements in family cohesion.</p> <p>Participants from neighbourhood family programs reported increased social connections.</p>

carya in the community

“As a police officer, I saw the outcomes of when we didn't invest in people. So when I see the work that carya does, I understand really deeply, the impact that it has long-term... not just on those individuals, but on the community.”
- Nina Vaughn, Board Member

23

service locations
across Calgary

5,000

volunteer hours
generously contributed

43,613

connections made
in the Calgary community

“carya supported me through some of the hardest times I've had and helped me transition towards a better version of myself. - carya client”



Click the play button above to watch a short video and learn more about how **carya** impacts the lives of thousands of Calgarians each year.

It takes a *village*

For many who walk through the doors of **carya**, that first step can be a particularly challenging one. It is often very hard for individuals to identify or articulate their struggles with others, particularly if they are feeling isolated or lonely. This was true for Irene.

During the pandemic, Irene lost her job, and her declining health meant that she also lost her driver's license. She was forced to sell her house and let go of belongings that meant so much to her. Even with a supportive family, Irene became very depressed. "I felt like I was checking out, and that my body was giving out. I questioned and thought 'what's the point?'" says Irene looking back.

When Irene was introduced to **carya**, she described her journey as coming back into life and trying to fit back in when everything you have known has changed. Through a comprehensive offering of programs and services, Irene was able to engage in a variety of group programs and started to enhance her resilience and build connections, at her own pace and on her own terms.

"There is a gentleness to the groups, you see people's strengths, meeting other people who are in different stages and changes in life. They are my inspiration... Attending these groups is like breathing fresh air into my life; it gives me the desire to live."

Today, Irene remains actively engaged in programs, acting as a champion and engaging others in her community who could use the support of **carya**.

At Village Commons, **carya's** Community Hub located in East Village, the coffee is always on, and the programs are barrier-free. From evidence-based counselling and mental health supports to inclusive group offerings, hubs like this make it possible for vulnerable community members like Irene to engage in programs and services in a convenient, safe, and supportive environment.

According to Calgary's poverty reduction strategy, Community Hubs have been developed as an effective approach to poverty reduction by providing a container for community development.



14,068
visits to
Village Commons

1,563
activities hosted at
Village Commons

Thanks to our incredible supporters

carya is grateful to the over 400 individual investors, corporate partners, and funders who made so much possible for individuals and families in our community in 2022.



Bowmont Seniors Assistance Association
Calgary Housing Company
Calgary Municipal Land Corporation
Calgary Society for Healthy Childhood Development
CSV Midstream Solutions
EFW Radiology
Hamilton & Partners

Mawer Investment Management
MEG Energy
New Horizons for Seniors
One Exchange Corp.
Proplan Financial Group
RBC Foundation
Shaw Birdies for Kids
Silver Gummy Foundation

Please note, the names recognized above include gifts of \$1,000 or more contributed by funders, foundations, and corporate partners from January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022.

In 2022, hundreds of dedicated investors contributed

\$9,791,832

allowing **carya** to provide timely, responsive, and critical programs and services in the Calgary community.

Visit caryacalgary.ca/reports to view our 2022 Audited Financial Statements

Registered Charitable No. 118823475 RR0001

“What carya does is fill the gap between what people need and what they have access to.”

Jennifer Santry, Board Chair



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Looking *forward*

In 2022, our leadership team came together to evaluate and strategize the future of **carya**'s work. The result? **carya**'s 2023-2028 Strategic Plan. Below are our new Strategic Priorities:



PRIORITY 1: Provide exceptional, high-quality social services to individuals and families.



PRIORITY 2: Enhance our financial stability and diversify our revenue.



PRIORITY 3: Build our organizational, community, and sector capacity to address complex social issues.



PRIORITY 4: Maximize our potential and offer an exceptional employee experience.

While our priorities have evolved to meet the unique needs of our community and the ever-changing environment of the social sector, as always, **carya** remains deeply rooted in our work and our Mission.

Together we can create a community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. *carya is here.*





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