

# FuseSocial Portfolio

## FuseSocial Portfolio – 2016/2017

### Data and Innovation

#### **Social Procurement**

Social procurement is the philosophy of building community and social benefit into an organization's purchasing policies. The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) piloted several social procurement strategies in their procurement policies in fall 2016 and have now completed several successful projects.

Building on the momentum created by the RMWB's success, there is interest in the community in advancing the social procurement concept into the community at large. Over the next year, through a partnership FuseSocial will provide opportunities for public and private organizations to learn about and incorporate the concept of social procurement. Concurrently, the social profit sector will have opportunities to learn about and explore potential social enterprise possibilities, allowing them to create their own revenue streams, increase self-sufficiency and sustainability.

#### **Executive Director Compensation Report**

After receiving numerous requests for information on Executive Director compensation packages, a survey was conducted to determine compensation trends in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. The results of this survey covered areas such as size, annual operating budget, base rate per year, and total compensation (including benefits, vacation, etc.). -In addition, it will be a useful guideline for organizations when recruiting new executive directors or during compensation reviews.

[CLICK HERE for detailed report](#)

#### **Exploring uses of the community strategy roadmap (in partnership with [OSCA](#))**

FuseSocial was designated a 'steward' of the [Wood Buffalo Community Strategy Roadmap](#), an innovative tool that provides a strategic plan for the community. Our community could progress to a place of resilience and sustainability if we work together to achieve the outcomes on the roadmap. FuseSocial has utilized the roadmap as a framework to organize several research projects, including the Community Needs Assessment and a community performance measurement tool. The measurement

tool includes a series of performance indicators intended to help us answer critical questions, such as; Are funders funding the right things? Are social profits working strategically? The indicators could help to demonstrate where there are gaps and where there has been progress. FuseSocial continues to explore innovative ways to utilize the roadmap and support its adoption as a shared strategic vision for the entire community.

## **Social Profit Value Proposition (Social Profit Economic Assessment Study) - August 2017 – January 2018**

Traditionally, social profits have never been afforded the same credibility or value to the regional economy as small/medium businesses. This has led to inequities in available financial support, especially evident post-wildfire, when social profit organizations were unable to access critical financial support in a timely and streamlined process, which was crucial to keeping their programs and services available to the community.

The Economic Impact Assessment study is designed to give an accurate picture of the true economic contribution to our regional economy, and bring focus on to the importance of the sector to our regional, provincial, and national economies. The Government of Alberta is also preparing to do a larger, province wide study.

It is anticipated that the data from this project will provide support for funding applications, elevate the social profit sector profile to gain equal consideration and representation alongside business and industry at relevant community committees and discussions.

**Report release January 2018**

## **Accreditation**

[Imagine Canada](#) has created a national program for social profit agencies to demonstrate they maintain a high level of best practice using their fined standards. This helps elevate professionalism and build trust for stakeholders, funders and clients.

Currently four agencies in Fort McMurray are accredited. FuseSocial became accredited in 2016. The process provided learnings which we share with agencies currently working toward accreditation. This support is tailored to the needs of each agency, ranging from occasional questions to support with writing out processes and advice on creating policies.

## **Alberta Social Innovation (ABSI) Connect Fellow**

FuseSocial is hosting the Northern Connect Fellow working on Social Indigenous Innovation. The ABSI Connect Fellows formed in August 2015 to get at the heart of the question: How can we do better at solving complex social and environmental problems in our province? Inspiring this question was the

diverse and rich research, initiatives, networks, interest and questions surfacing around social innovation in Alberta.

Initiatives being worked on currently:

1. Indigenous Innovation Summit
2. Language Exploration Resource
3. Indigenous Social Lab
4. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

[Learn more about ABSI](#)

## **Advocacy and Political Engagement**

FuseSocial believes strongly in the 'voice' of the social profit sector. A priority of FuseSocial is to increase interaction and strengthen relationships with politicians and key stakeholders. We see great value in enhancing these partnerships to improve lines of communications, and promote social profit issues, challenges and successes; ultimately having the sector's input directly linked to the decision-making process (at the community, provincial and federal levels). The development of the FuseSocial Portfolio will be a beneficial tool to assist in achieving these objectives.

We have established partnerships by requesting and sharing vital information (such as Wildfire Impact Survey results) with various provincial ministries and MLA's FuseSocial will be hosting a unique reverse candidates forum prior to the October 16 election. This will allow candidates to better understand the social profit sector within our region and reinforce its significant value. Opening these lines of communication is part of FuseSocial's ongoing strategy.

## **Emergency Preparedness and Business Continuity – May 2017-Present**

Post-wildfire FuseSocial recognized the need to improve lines of communication with outside stakeholders during an emergency. We also recognized the need to manage and reduce our organization's risk. FuseSocial is not the only agency that see this as a priority moving forward in recovery. How ready was the social profit sector for such a disaster? Were the proper communication channels available to our sector to assist in response? How well did each social profit prepare their own organization? These are questions facing our sector.

The social profit sector has the unique ability to be flexible, make swift decisions and mobilize quickly. These are essential tools during a time of crisis. How can our sector be better utilized during an

emergency? We reached out to the City of Calgary and other agencies to get more insight. Taking their learnings we began to explore our own emergency preparedness initiative for the social profit sector (from the structure of [Emergency Preparedness Initiative of Calgary - EPIC](#)). We've been able to initiate conversations with key community stakeholders and gather momentum in recognizing the benefit of developing a similar program.

We've taking it one step further and begun discussions at a provincial level. Working together as a sector provincial with key stakeholders (i.e. Provincial government) we can influence system change and better prepare our sector for the next disaster. We would be able to work with stakeholders to develop standardization, strategies for volunteer and donation management, fund diversity and efficient lines of communications. Most of all it would establish a seat for the social profit sector at the discussion tables and allow our sector to assist in decision making.

## **Leadership and Training**

### **Leadership Wood Buffalo**

Leading in the 21st century is at the best of times a courageous act of navigating complexity. Sound leadership begins squarely with the self-understanding that the leader continuously develops throughout their leadership journey. Research and experience tells us that leaders lead best when they operate from their strengths, values, passions, and from a clear personal vision that provides meaning and intention to their work.

Leadership Wood Buffalo is an experience-based, Community Leadership program designed exclusively for the emerging leader in Wood Buffalo to increase and adapt their personal leadership capacities and skills. During the program, participants will experience leadership development through the exploration of four key objectives.

1. Building Personal Leadership capacity (confidence, building on strength, resiliency)
2. Understand and leverage your leadership impact in the Community
3. Develop and nurture your peer network
4. Increase capacity and understanding of how to lead through dynamic change and complexity (systems thinking focus)

Leadership Wood Buffalo is now moving into its eleventh year with over 190 graduates. The 2017-2018 Leadership cohort is excited to spend the next five months working in the community where they will explore and develop their personal leadership, increase their understanding of community and assist social profit organizations build their capacity.

[Learn more about Leadership Wood Buffalo](#)

## Leadership Circle

Throughout a series of three two-day workshops, community stakeholders worked together through a facilitated process to set the foundation for collaboration. One of the resulting outcomes from the third workshop was the identification of five community challenge areas. The number one challenge area that was identified was; *there is a lack of collaborative leadership (all sectors) and strategic coordination of services/programs, failing to maximize the available resources in the community.* During the workshop the participating stakeholders, identified community champions (assets) that could work together on this specific challenge area. The identified community champions came together to explore the challenge area further, where it was decided this particular challenge area needed to be addressed both at a community level and within the social profit sector itself. Based on the need to address this issue within the social profit sector, FuseSocial initiated a Leadership circle that will bring together senior leaders to discuss at a systemic level, how social profit organizations can work more collaboratively. Through a facilitated process, FuseSocial will coordinate a Leadership circle allowing senior leaders the opportunity to work collaboratively on addressing social profit sector challenges.

## Academic Calendar

The Academic Calendar is an annual offer of training and professional development intended for the Wood Buffalo Social Profit Sector that raises the skills and capacity of teams and organizations.

All the training offered in the Academic Calendar meets the following requirements:

- Courses and workshops are always provided locally.
- Tuition fees are affordable (some offered at no cost).
- Imagine Canada standards of quality are always met.

An organization's outputs and eventual outcomes, depend on the organization's capacities. The academic calendar professional development offerings will strengthen three main types of organizational capacities:

1. Financial Capacity
2. Human Resources Capacity
3. Structural Capacity

[Find out more about Academic Calendar](#)

## Board Governance Boot Camp for Social Profits Oct 19-21, 2017

The Board Governance Bootcamp is a 3-day session in partnership with Capacity Canada. It consists of an evening reception with special speaker VuLe, alumni from previous boot camps, and 2 days of training that delivers practical governance training to non-profit Executive Directors and Board Chairs, and a follow up day in March. This training equips them with relevant action plans that will deliver a noticeable performance improvement in their boardrooms. The program has been designed to focus on governance processes, rich inter-activity, and relevance of content. Considering the amount of turnover of ED's and Board Chairs especially post-wildfire, this governance will help build capacity in organizations in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

## **Heart Awards 2017**

A vibrant, dynamic community understands that prosperity is not measured just in economic terms but also in social well-being. The Heart of Wood Buffalo Leadership Awards honour the outstanding achievements of some of the inspiring individuals and organizations who have made invaluable contributions to that quality of life – visionary, passionate, hardworking and committed men and women and the organizations they support, whose accomplishments, in a variety of sectors have made Wood Buffalo a better place to live, work and play. These social profit leaders, philanthropists, volunteers and their agencies have embraced innovation, collaboration and capacity building, leading through example. Their extraordinary efforts make it clear why they are the heart of Wood Buffalo.

### **2017 Award Winners:**

**Norma Jean Atkinson** – *Board Leadership Award*

**Tara Clarke** – *Executive Leadership Award*

**McMurray Metis** – *Community Impact Award*

**Barbara Weber** – *Newcomer Engagement Award in Memory of Lyle Leboldus*

**Reno Laseur** – *Volunteer Recognition Award in Honour of Bill Bloomfield*

**Nicole Greville** – *Social Prosperity Leadership Award*

[Heart Awards Website](#)

## **Volunteerism**

## **Participation in Community Events**

The Wood Buffalo Volunteer Centre (WBVC- a Red Cross funded project) has taken an active role in providing volunteers for or promoting volunteerism at local community events

Examples:

- Thanksgiving Community Celebration-mobilizing volunteers to support the event
- 1 Year Fire Anniversary Dawn 'til Dusk Reflection Event (thanking and appreciating volunteers)
- Community Registration Day

## **Promoting Volunteerism**

To engage community, targeted campaigns aimed at championing volunteerism, encouraging (and rewarding!) people for volunteering in the community have been developed. The current campaign, "Hey Mac! Tell Us Where You Are At!", in partnership with TELUS, is a fun, interactive strategy whereby Mac the Monkey, our ambassador for volunteerism, acts as a tool to engage people and create a culture of volunteerism.

Mac the Monkey has been seen at:

- The Urban Markets
- The Senior's Wellness Expo
- PrideYMM
- Fort McMurray Food Festival
- The Rotary Youth Rally

## **Volunteer Networking**

Working with volunteer agencies to garner resources, information and to establish best practices to pass along to the Wood Buffalo social profit sector:

- Volunteer Alberta
- Volunteer Canada
- Edmonton Chamber of Volunteer Organizations
- Calgary Chamber of Volunteer Organizations
- Volunteer Management Professionals of Canada

## **Key partnerships with community stakeholders**

In an effort to engage more with the Wood Buffalo volunteer community and connect them with key initiatives, a Community Engagement strategy was developed in partnership with the following stakeholders:

#### Partnerships:

- Suncor Energy
- Shell Albian Sands
- Telus
- Edmonton Community Foundation
- Alberta Real Estate Foundation
- Driving Force
- Casman Group of Companies
- ConocoPhillips
- Rogers Media
- Wood Buffalo Housing and Development Corporation
- Red Cross
- Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

### **Timeraiser - 2017**

Timeraiser is a party for social good! It is a night of contemporary art, great music, connecting with amazing social profit organizations and coming together as a community.

The evening consists of connecting with stand-out social profit organizations to find meaningful volunteer opportunities, bidding on art by up-and-coming local artists in an auction where you bid with your volunteer time, not your money.

#### 2017 Event stats:

- 54 pieces of art auctioned off
- 13 young artists showcased in the inaugural Budding Artist category
- 20 social profit agencies represented at the event
- \$21,000 put into the Wood Buffalo arts community
- 3,165 volunteer hours raised

### **National Volunteer Week 2017**

National Volunteer Week is an annual celebration to promote and show appreciation for volunteerism and volunteering. It is a national event organized by Volunteer Canada and was first conceived in 1943 as a way to celebrate the contribution made by women on the home front to the war effort.

#### 2017 Event consisted of:

- Monday: Media campaign to appreciate the AMAZING Social Profit Agencies in our community and to showcase the volunteer opportunities they have to offer
- Tuesday: Volunteer Manager's Appreciation Breakfast (30 agencies represented and 70 people in attendance)
- Wednesday: WOW! Wear Orange Wednesday. Orange is often associated with empowerment, change, perseverance and determination. All the qualities found in our community's volunteers!

Today we will celebrate our community and the impact volunteers have to help us through some of the most trying times. Wear orange today and hug a volunteer today!

- Thursday: The 6th Annual Timeraiser
- Friday: Youth too, can Volunteer! Today we dedicate and celebrate the youth in our community and recognize the impact they have towards our health, vibrancy and vitality.

## Volunteerism Newsletters

In order to keep the 3 key parties involved in volunteerism apprised of the latest news, best practices and industry trends, the Wood Buffalo Volunteer Centre (WBVC) has distributed monthly newsletters to:

### 1. Volunteers Registered in WBVolunteers.ca

The volunteers signed up to receive the newsletter are alerted to opportunities in the community, given statistics and provided data on how their efforts benefitted organizations in the community

### 2. Organizations

In an effort to build capacity within organizations, we strive to provide agencies with tips, tools and links to resources to assist them in recruiting, orienting, training, supervising, recognizing, evaluating and retaining volunteers

### 3. Business and industry

Promoting corporate volunteer programs within business and industry is a key focus and showcasing employees engaged in volunteer activities in the community helps to deliver this positive message.

## Christmas Season - 2016

**Keyano College Gala**-Keyano College's annual Gala shines as the region's signature black-tie event. Gala is an evening of philanthropy, friendship, music, and all out fun! The event is a chance for guests to come together, support the region's local college, and celebrate our resilient community over refreshments and entertainment.

WBVolunteers.ca helped support the recruitment of 30 external volunteers needed to host the event

**Northern Lights Health Foundation Festival of Tress**-A three-day holiday festival that includes fun-filled activities for the whole family and is anchored by the Festival of Trees gala on the last evening. The event is in support of vital medical equipment, programs and services in the Wood Buffalo region.

WBVolunteers.ca helped support the recruitment of over 200 volunteers needed to host the event

**Santa's Anonymous**- Father Mercredi Community High School has been organizing the Santas Anonymous campaign for Fort McMurray and the surrounding areas for over 30 years. The students and staff at Father Mercredi take great pride in being able to provide this service to the families in Fort McMurray and its surrounding communities. The program gives their students the chance to be leaders

as they learn about the needs of others and work hard to raise money, organize events, and fill hampers. Through the support of community volunteers, the students were able to fill and deliver hampers to over 600 families in need.

**Donated Stockings-** In November, the WBVC was contacted by the Good Ridge Quilting Guild, out of Edmonton, who reached out to inquire about families who had lost homes. The Guild was interested in making the holiday season just a little brighter for those families by providing new, homemade stockings to replace those that were lost in the fire. The group sent 25 quilted stockings to Fort McMurray and, through partnership with Northlife Fellowship Baptist Church, the WBVC was able to identify a number of families in need. The next step was to reach out to our industry partner, Suncor, to provide volunteers to assist at the Church in sorting donations and stuffing the quilted stockings with presents and festive items. It was a joint effort by many committed and passionate partners and resulted in a holiday season that was just a little merrier for a few families affected by the fire.

## **Capacity building for social profits**

FuseSocial strives to provide social profit agencies with best practices and current trends in volunteerism to create a competent, effective sector that is well equipped to recruit, orient, train, supervise, recognize, evaluate and retain volunteers. Additionally, we are committed to creating a culture of collaboration so that volunteer resources in the community can be shared and all organizations can benefit. We aim to deliver our message through workshops, presentations, one-on-one sessions, online resource sharing and building partnerships with industry experts.

- Presentation to the Fort McMurray Public School District: Youth Volunteering
- Academic Calendar Presentation: Your Volunteer Workforce-Recruitment Strategies
- Academic Calendar Presentation: Your Volunteer Workforce-Engagement and Recognition Strategies
- YMCA "Bridging the Gap Presentation-Volunteering as a Gateway to Employment
- Imagine Canada Accreditation. Presentation on best practices in volunteerism to the local agencies seeking accreditation
- United Way, Agency Partner's Round Table-How to Effectively Use WBVolunteers.ca and the Wood Buffalo Volunteer Centre to support your volunteer needs
- Volunteer Screening Forum (in partnership with Volunteer Alberta)

## **WBVolunteers.ca 2.0**

WBVolunteers.ca has proven to be an instrumental tool for the WBVC. With an 800% increase in users since the establishment of the Wood Buffalo Volunteer Centre, it clearly is a resource that is utilized in our community. It has succeeded in matching skilled and event-based volunteers with agencies in the

community requiring either a person with a specific skillset or simply with an energetic community-minded individual looking to make a difference.

As we engaged with both volunteers and agencies via the website, we realized that it could do so much more to support capacity building, to create a culture of collaboration and to effectively match volunteers with opportunities in the community. Our vision moving forward is to provide a platform that essentially becomes a one-stop-shop for all things volunteerism! We want to support the sector in finding, onboarding and retaining volunteers and support our citizens in matching with the perfect agency so they become committed, lifelong volunteers. 2017 will be an exciting time as we launch WBV 2.0!

Add on's:

- Enhanced volunteer and organization profiles
- Auto populated volunteer/organization specific 'top picks'
- Volunteer database system for organizations
- Reporting opportunity for organizations
- Volunteer hour tracking system
- Event Calendar
- Local, provincial and national community focus news feeds

[WBVolunteers.ca](http://WBVolunteers.ca)

## **ESS Training for Disaster Support**

FuseSocial joined the Emergency Social Services response team when we formed. Our role is to manage walk-in volunteers, arrange shift schedules with the teams for deployments of up to 72 hours and work any roles that we are trained in. Six FuseSocial team members were part of the 2016 wildfire reception and group lodging centre team starting May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, giving over 100 hours of time during the initial response prior to evacuation.

All fulltime FuseSocial staff become part of the ESS team and finish their basic training within six months of joining the team.

[Learn more about ESS](#)

# **FuseSocial Portfolio Post-Wildfire**

## **Evacuation and Re-entry**

## Planning Day with the Social Profits from Fort McMurray – May 2016

On May 27, 2016, with the guidance from [Capacity Canada](#) more than 60 representatives from the social profit sector attended a gathering at the Santa Maria Goretti Centre in Edmonton. The purpose of the session was to reconnect, reflect and talk about a shared future as a social profit sector.

There were representatives from the community that shared information and updates:

- **Brandi Gartner**, Community Relations Director with the Oil Sands Community Alliance spoke on behalf of Reegan McMullough (executive Director) regarding the role that OSCA can play to support community.
- **Nick Noik**, General Manager at Community Futures Wood Buffalo spoke about the role of the organization to support small businesses in their process to get re-established.
- **Dr. Brenda Sautner**, Associate Superintendent Education & Administration at Fort McMurray Public School District provided an update on the schools.
- **Kim Nordbye**, Community Investment with Suncor Energy Foundation spoke about the update from the Funders Circle

There were representatives from specialized areas of emergency management and psychosocial wellbeing that shared their expertise:

- **Matt Sawatsky**, Emergency Preparedness Specialist with Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (ECVO) provided “Shared Learning from the 2013 Southern Alberta Floods”.

**Matt Baden**, Community Initiatives Manager, provided an update from the Red Cross that included the Community Organization Partnerships Program that would be announced. This program provides funding for community as part of the recovery process.

- **Charmaine Hammond**, an expert in leadership, resilience and conflict management provided a session on compassion fatigue from the workplace perspective.

**Explorers, Pathfinders and Leaders – Report from Planning Day [CLICK HERE](#)**

## Stories of Fort McMurray – May 2016

Adam Fearnall wrote a series of short ‘stories’ based on the words of people who he spoke to about the evacuation, the fire, and the road back to the community. It is a reminder of the wisdom that people from Fort McMurray hold in their hearts and minds, says Adam.

[Stories from Fort McMurray](#)

## **Critical Information Updates – May-July 2016**

These were a series of 7 weekly update documents that were intended to support executive directors and boards of directors as their organizations planned for re-entry to the community and to resume operations. [Charmaine Hammond](#) assisted FuseSocial in providing updated information about resources and funding available to organizations, and information about resilience for their team and clients.

**Critical Information Update 1 – [CLICK HERE](#)**

**Critical Information Update 5 – [CLICK HERE](#)**

**Critical Information Update 2 – [CLICK HERE](#)**

**Critical Information Update 6 – [CLICK HERE](#)**

**Critical Information Update 3 – [CLICK HERE](#)**

**Critical Information Update 7 – [CLICK HERE](#)**

**Critical Information Update 4 – [CLICK HERE](#)**

**Critical Information Update 8 – [CLICK HERE](#)**

## **Post Wildfire Re-entry – June 2016**

- 28 volunteers from Shell Albion Sands supported FuseSocial at the 7 Welcome Centres throughout the region
- FuseSocial assisted Fort McMurray Food Bank with volunteers during re-entry
- FuseSocial assisted agencies in obtaining skilled volunteers to assist in re-entry; volunteers fulfilling the gap in the lack of capacity for returning agencies.

## **Social Profit 'Welcome Home'– Summer 2016**

Upon returning to the region after evacuation FuseSocial felt the need to reach out to individual social profits. We wanted to welcome them back to the community and get a better understanding on what challenges these agencies were facing.

In July and August of 2016, the FuseSocial team visited over 50 agencies to see how we could assist them in returning to 'normal' operations. We found many agencies needed assistance in a variety of areas, such as, grant writing, human resources, finance, facility management, and fund development. We were able to work with these agencies on a one to one and bring agencies together to develop new networks for supporting each other.

## **[Recovery Post-Wildfire](#)**

## ***Volunteerism***

### **Wood Buffalo Volunteer Centre (WBVC –funded by Red Cross) - Established May 2016**

At the request of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and Red Cross, FuseSocial took on the administration and management of volunteerism for the region. This request expanded the level of service FuseSocial provides through its normal mandate.

WBVolunteers.ca, a tool to match volunteers in the community with agencies in need, has boasted an 800% increase in users since the establishment of the Wood Buffalo Volunteer Centre

### **Mobilization of large groups of out-of-region volunteers**

The Wood Buffalo Volunteer Centre has been instrumental in coordinating all the logistics involved with bringing volunteers to our community to support fire recovery efforts

Examples:

- John Zink Hamworthy employees from Tulsa Oklahoma volunteering at the Food Bank
- Mormon Helping Hands-148 volunteers assisted 4 social profit agencies during a 1-day deployment

### **Donation Coordination**

The WBVC has supported the mobilization of volunteers to assist with the process of sorting and distributing donations of goods, services and supplies delivered to Wood Buffalo post fire

Examples:

- Clothing Bank – Fort McMurray Catholic School District and St. Aidan's Society
- Wood Buffalo Food Bank Re-entry
- Pet Supplies for SPCA
- Quilted Stockings - Edmonton Quilters Guild, Northlife Baptist Church & Suncor Energy

### **Fire Related Committee Work**

The WBVC has had a presence on a number of community committees to support through volunteerism

Examples:

- *NGO's Supporting Uninsured and Underinsured Residents (NSUUR)*- volunteer village management, creating connections for volunteer support
- *Care Wood Buffalo*-volunteer recruitment and training

## Connecting corporations to volunteer programs

Over 100 volunteers have been deployed to agencies within the region to support their initiatives

Examples:

- Suncor Energy-Supporting the Fort McMurray Chess Club to establish a signature piece for Chess in the park
- Suncor Energy-Staff donated stockings to give to families who lost homes in the fire
- Shell Albian Sands-Welcome Centres in Beacon Hill and Abasand
- Telus- Telus Days of Giving (Community Clean-Up)

[CLICK HERE](#) for details of the *Wood Buffalo Volunteer Centre's Story*

## *Data and Innovation*

### Wildfire Impact Surveys

The social profit sector enhances the quality of life and ensures a caring and inclusive community for all citizens. The social profit sector of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo was negatively impacted by the Wildfire of 2016. In order to “build back a better community” a series of surveys were conducted on the social profit sector, establishing a baseline of the wildfire impact; monitoring the recovery of the social Profit Sector, and allowing the sector to develop strategic priorities to respond effectively to the needs of the community.

The Wildfire Impact Surveys uncovered several trends regarding financial and human resource impacts. For more information see below

**Wildfire Impact Survey I – [CLICK HERE](#) for detailed report**

**Wildfire Impact Survey II – [CLICK HERE](#) for detailed report**

**Wildfire Impact Survey III – [CLICK HERE](#) for detailed report**

### Fostering Collaboration

To promote coordination between leaders working in recovery, a series of three 2-day workshops were hosted at Shell Place. Shared language and tools were introduced to establish a foundation for progress,

and practitioners from other disaster-affected communities helped to set the stage for analyzing our own recovery efforts. Participants ultimately chose to focus on several important themes that require further energy and coordination – community leadership, the environment for youth in Wood Buffalo, and a sense of belonging / community image. Conversations have been convened to focus in on these issues, and collaborative approaches to improvement are being explored.

**Fostering Collaboration Summit 1 – Summary Report** [CLICK HERE](#)

**Fostering Collaboration Summit 2 – Summary Report** [CLICK HERE](#)

**Fostering Collaboration Summit 3 – Challenge Areas** [CLICK HERE](#)

## **Community Needs Assessment (January – February 2017)**

In February 2017 FuseSocial completed a Community Needs Assessment asking what services residents required from the social profit sector. These needs were compared to those identified by other studies in the area, as well as information taken from the social profit sector themselves. The questions in the Community Needs Assessment were developed using the Wood Buffalo Strategy Roadmap. The overall results were then presented to stakeholders and social profit agencies during the third Fostering Collaboration Summit to allow local social profits in the region to identify gaps present in the services they provided. The purpose of the Community Needs Assessment was to allow the social profit sector to streamline their recovery efforts.

**Community Needs Assessment Study -** [CLICK HERE](#)

**Long-term Effects of Disaster on the Social Profit Sector - February 2017 –  
January 2018**

Finding information on how to help the social profit sector of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo to recover from the 2016 wildfire was difficult. There are several documents on disaster recovery available, but none are social profit sector specific. To find out how best the sector can recover and to share this information with other disaster recovery teams across Canada, [Twelve Canada](#) is completing a research project to discover the recovery efforts of social profits in the region as well as a literature review. The purpose is to provide lessons learned, best practices and or recommendations for how our sector can recover from future disasters. Twelve Canada has been asked to conduct the research due to their participatory and innovative research strategies involving youth as leaders.

**Research report release scheduled for March 2018**

## **Building sector capacity during recovery**

The wildfire in May 2016 affected the whole community. Community needs increased at a time when the social profit agencies in the region were recovering from their own losses. There were many agencies with senior leader turnover, staff and volunteers who didn't return, as well as staff being unable to work due to health issues related to the wildfire. FuseSocial began to contact the sector within days after the wildfire.

With limited ability and resources FuseSocial staff and external professionals have supported agencies fill in capacity gaps by supporting human resource challenges through grant writing, strategic planning, and finding skilled volunteers to fill vacancies.

We are worked with agencies at risk of closing their doors to stabilize and regain lost capacity. Providing agencies with grant writing support over \$600,000 in funding was secured.

The sector has been deeply affected by the wildfire and the effects continue to challenge agencies. FuseSocial works to provide varying levels of support through trainings and providing staff time to help

## **Social Recovery Taskforce (SRT)**

SRT - post wildfire 2016 the social profit community realized that coordinated leadership was critical to community recovery. The Social Recovery Taskforce is a collective of social profit leaders that represented their sectors (i.e. housing, faith, recreation, etc.) with the intent to coordinate recovery efforts, identify emerging client issues and gaps, and provide an environment of collaboration that encouraged innovative partnerships and solutions. FuseSocial participated as the representative for volunteerism, and the social profit sector as a whole, providing insight, data, and observations on what the social profit sector was experiencing during evacuation and into recovery.

## **Lessons Learned Post Wildfire**

Post wildfire 2016, FuseSocial identified the need to reach out to communities throughout Alberta who had been affected by similar disasters. What could we learn from their experiences? We met with groups and organizations from Calgary, High River and Slave Lake. Through various meetings, focus groups and collaborative discussions we concluded that our communities weren't very different when it came to emergency response and recovery.

When dealing with emergency management we were able to get a clearer picture of their issues, roadblocks, and processes. We learned from their recovery success stories, pitfalls and development of new initiatives. These learnings have been a tool in moving forward and have led to collaborative initiatives that we are looking at applying (i.e. Emergency Preparedness and Business Continuity Management for the social profit sector).

We have not only learned a great deal from these communities and recognized our similarities when our communities were engulfed in disaster, but we developed relationships that can hopefully lead to collaborative system change and a support networks for future communities effected by similar events.

## ***Leadership and Training***

### **Academic Calendar**

Following the wildfire, FuseSocial made a concerted effort to identify the emerging needs of the social profit sector through both individual engagement and a wildfire impact survey series. Many of the programs offered in the fall of 2016 reflected our efforts to remain responsive to the needs of our sector and our community.

Academic Calendar courses were offered to the social profit sector that addressed issues identified in the wildfire survey. Issues included gaps in staffing, lack of funding., and staff mental health concerns.

Courses included:

- Work Life Balance- Nurturing Self FULLfillment and Managing Stress Saboteurs
- Grant Writing 101
- Grief, Loss, and Compassion Fatigue
- Your Volunteer Workforce - Part 1: Recruitment Strategies
- Your Volunteer Workforce – Part 2: Engagement and Recognition Strategies
- HeartMath

### **Executive Director Leadership**

In May 2016, Wood Buffalo was hit by a devastating wildfire that forever changed the structure of the community. Following the wildlife FuseSocial initiated a series of *Impact of the Wildfire on the Social*

*Profit Sector* surveys. According to the first wildfire survey that was conducted in July 2016, 43% of social profit agencies were operating at below capacity and 50% lost at least one staff member. Results of the second *Impact of the Wildfire*, conducted in October 2016, six - month post wildfire, indicated that 43% of organizations are still short of their pre-wildfire community support capacity. In fact, the study showed that there are vacancies in the following areas: 13% executive directors; 14% staff; 15% board members; and 13% volunteers. Given the current state of the social profit organizations in Wood Buffalo, FuseSocial recognized the importance of building leadership capacity within the social profit organizations to help navigate through these unprecedented times and also to build the capacity of the community as a whole for future sustainability.

The Executive Director program falls under FuseSocial's pillars of Capacity Building and Social Innovation. The outcomes of this program include; build personal leadership capacity, (confidence, building on strengths, and resiliency). To understand and leverage the ED Leadership role within the organization, and to develop and nurture relationships with other Executive Directors in the community. Based on current best practices, the ED Leadership program runs for five months, totalling forty-five hours of classroom time.