

Van Tel/Safeway Credit Union Legacy Fund Fall 2021 Grant Report

The [Van Tel/Safeway Credit Union Legacy Fund](#) is held at Vancity Community Foundation and provides grants twice a year to charities supporting positive futures for vulnerable youth, and enhanced wellbeing for vulnerable seniors.

In the Fall 2021 grant round, a total of \$29,328.00 was approved for distribution to the following seven organizations:

Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Centre of British Columbia

<https://crisiscentre.bc.ca/>

Spanning the spectrum of crisis support, suicide prevention, and postvention, the Crisis Centre of BC engages staff and volunteers in a variety of services and programs that educate, train, and support the strength and capacity of individuals and communities. They offer immediate access to barrier-free, non-judgmental, confidential support and follow-up through 24/7 phone lines and online services. They also provide education and training programs that promote mental wellness and equip schools, organizations, and communities to assist people at risk of suicide.

With support from the VanTel/Safeway Fund, the Crisis Centre's *Suicide Bereavement Program* will help serve isolated seniors who are bereaved by suicide loss of a partner or loved one. This support will help ensure that vulnerable seniors can receive one-on-one support and learn about resources available to them.

Arbutus Shaughnessy Kerrisdale (ASK) Friendship Society

<https://askcentre.ca/>

The Arbutus Shaughnessy Kerrisdale (ASK) Friendship Society is an Adult Day Program focusing on the wellbeing of seniors and their caregivers. For 45 years, ASK has provided opportunities for seniors to connect with friends and have fun doing therapeutic activities with trained staff.

The VanTel/Safeway Fund contributed to ASK's *Meal Delivery Program*, which serves to provide healthy, home-cooked meals for vulnerable seniors in Vancouver. Particularly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many seniors are feeling isolated, lonely, and many don't feel safe leaving

their homes to get essential items, like healthy foods. ASK's meal program helps to bridge these gaps, by providing nutritious meals and, at the same time, conducting wellness check-ins with seniors, whereby staff can make connections with seniors and help combat feelings of loneliness or isolation.

The Writers' Exchange Society

<https://vancouverwe.com/>

The VanTel/Safeway Fund contributed to the Writers' Exchange Society's *High School After-School Programs*, which is a new program supporting under-resourced youth in grades 6/7 from Seymour, Strathcona, ɥuuqinak'uuh (Grandview), and ɥpeɥ Elementary Schools as they transition to Britannia Secondary. The youths partaking in this program are from neighbourhoods that correlate with low-income levels, number of children in Ministry care, unemployment, single parent homes, high numbers of newcomers, and high ELL populations. Participants of this program are referred by teachers because they struggle with literacy and would benefit from enriching activities and connections to positive role models.

The Writers' Exchange is a community that supports under-resourced kids and youth to become confident and excited about reading, writing and their own potential! Their free, out-of-school programs create a safe, encouraging space where kids and youth boost their social-emotional competencies, complete self-directed literacy activities, connect with volunteer mentors and enjoy abundant, nutritious snacks. Activities are inspired by youths' interests, and their work is published and printed in chapbooks that are launched at community celebrations.

The Trails Society of British Columbia

<https://trailsbc.ca/>

The Trails Society of BC was established to route, build, and develop the Trans Canada Trail with the BC Government in 1994. The Trails Society of BC now supports a full range of trails for everyone, keeping in mind the necessity to not mix incompatible uses on the same trail in order to maintain a quality experience for everyone. They advocate for the preservation of natural, historic and developed trails in BC, and promote the development and establishment of trails allowing for quality recreational experiences by non-motorized users in BC.

VanTel/Safeway funding will help facilitate the Trail Society of BC's *Great Blue Heron Way* project, which will assist in re-establishing traditional linkages between Coast Salish communities in Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley. This project will include the development of a First Nations youth-led vision and strategic plan for the Great Blue Heron

Way, a network of walking, cycling, and rolling paths connecting First Nations and other communities in the Lower Mainland. The youth working on this project will be under the guidance and leadership of Elder xwasteniya of the Tsawwassen First Nation.

Environmental Youth Alliance

<https://eya.ca/>

The VanTel/Safeway Fund contributed to the Environmental Youth Alliance's (EYA) *Nature Stewards* program. In 2022, EYA will deliver 26 Nature Stewards programs, serving 200 vulnerable youth in East Vancouver. Each program consists of ten 4-hour facilitated sessions for cohorts of eight youth, centred on three themes: native plant horticulture, wildlife habitat restoration, and Indigenous foodscapes. Through hands-on activities that braid Indigenous teachings with Western ecology, youth will: learn to propagate and grow thousands of wildlife-supporting native plants at EYA's Downtown Eastside Nursery; plant Indigenous foodscapes with medicinal plants and learn to make salves and teas with Indigenous knowledge keepers; learn how to restore wildlife habitats and build habitat nest boxes; learn to weave baskets and rope with native plants; and will connect with Indigenous Elders through ceremony and story.

Founded in 1989, EYA supports IBPOC and youth facing systemic barriers to connect with nature and develop the skills and confidence to become environmental stewards. EYA provides free, trauma-informed, land-based education and paid employment training programs that braid ecological science with Indigenous cultural knowledge. EYA supports 600 youth annually in progressive and accessible programs that engage youth in hands-on projects to restore urban wildlife habitat, while enhancing social and economic wellbeing, and improving access to nature in Vancouver's lower-income eastside communities.

Learning Disabilities Society of Greater Vancouver

<https://ldsociety.ca/>

As a nonprofit charity that has transformed lives through learning for over 50 years, the Learning Disabilities Society of Greater Vancouver (LDS) offers financially accessible, high-quality learning support to children and youth with learning disabilities. Their Research-informed Individualized Student Education (RISE) programs provide customized one-to-one or small group educational support services online, in school, and at LDS Learning Centres. Through early intervention, their goal is to make a transformative difference in the life outcomes of students.

VanTel/Safeway funding will support the *LDS Access Mobile Classroom*, which is a mobile classroom service that will provide outreach RISE services to vulnerable children and youth with learning disabilities in 2022. With three teaching stations inside the mini-bus, LDS Access will serve families where they are, regardless of their ability to pay.

CanAssist at the University of Victoria

<https://www.canassist.ca/>

CanAssist at the University of Victoria (UVic) is a highly respected national resource that collaborates with UVic researchers and students, as well as diverse external partners, to provide people who experience physical or cognitive barriers with innovative technologies, programs and services that address unmet needs and increase independence, inclusion and well-being.

The VanTel/Safeway Fund contributed to CanAssist's *TeenWork* program. TeenWork focuses on improving the independence and quality of life of high-school-aged youth with disabilities and mental health challenges by helping participants find and retain meaningful, paid employment, and enabling them to acquire practical skills and self-confidence that will serve them throughout their working lives. Up to 30 youth participate in TeenWork each year, and each participant is provided individualized, person-centered supports from CanAssist Job Coaches. TeenWork job coaches also provide knowledge to employers on inclusive hiring and workplace accommodations, and ensure employers feel supported and confident in supporting employees with diverse abilities.

Contact Us

For more information about Vancity Community Foundation or the Van Tel / Safeway Credit Union Legacy Foundation, please visit: www.VancityCommunityFoundation.ca or contact us at give@vancity.com.