



2019
ANNUAL REPORT



From the Hearts of Blue Executive Committee

As we closed out our year, I thought of all the volunteers and all the hours we contributed to Hearts of Blue in one way or another in 2019.

One quote that I love says “life is not measured by the number of breaths that we take, but by the number of moments that take our breath away.” As I look around, read the News to Use articles and see emails come my way for Days of Giving events, I see lots of stories and memories that can be shared within our own lives and with the people we know.

I often get asked why I enjoy being on the Hearts of Blue committee and I can honestly say that, I love what we do and the impact it makes in our society. I love the connections I make with the charities I personally work with, as well as the ones that we support as a committee. Seeing the gratitude that comes our way when we assist a charity and hearing how our donations help people makes my heart pitter-patter. It’s a reminder of how we help others in hopes that one day they’ll be able to pass it on somehow.

I am always humbled by the spirit and compassion of Alberta Blue Cross employees, as well as their families and friends. It’s because of all the wonderful, caring people who give so generously, so compassionately and with such care that we can continue to work our magic for Albertans—they are truly Hearts of Blue heroes!

In 2019, we assisted many charities and donated over \$45,000 worth of items. Our charitable efforts ranged from donating jewelry and purses for Cinderella’s Closet to sorting food for the Edmonton Food Bank.

From the wonderful people we serve four times a year at Operation Friendship Senior’s Society, to the faces of gratitude at the charities that are in dire need of items we donate, the art of volunteering warms my heart. I believe we are truly blessed to be able to work within such an amazing committee and company that allow us to participate in what we already love to do.

I applaud all our donors and volunteers for making 2019 an exceptional year—it was one of our best years of helping our communities!



Mirella Nardi

From Hearts of Blue to everyone who supports us, thank you!

We hope this report gives you a small glimpse into what your generosity does for the charities and, more importantly, the people across this province.



Amanda Croot



Nirmal Singh



Ashley Bolduc



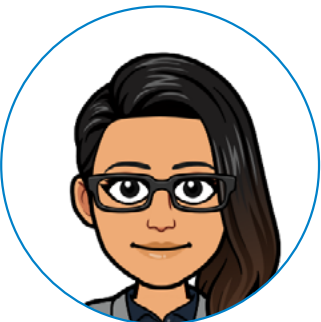
Debbie Roshuk



Gabriella Aparicio



Tony Klassen



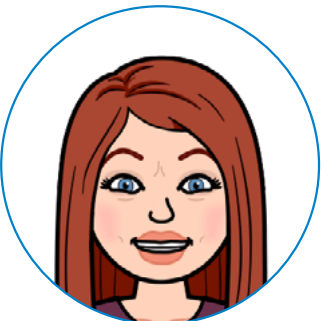
Gayathri Sreekanth



Joan Tandy



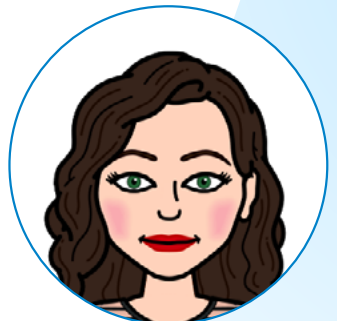
Brian Geislinger



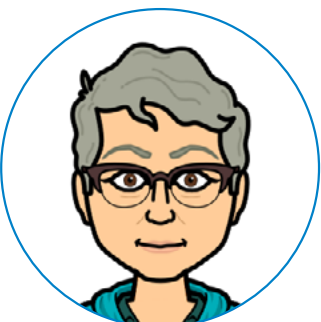
Laurie Bayrak



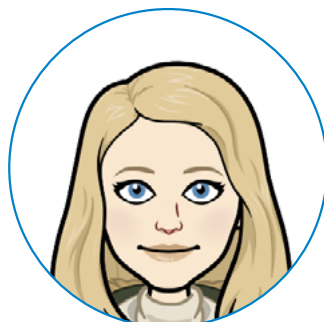
Adina Green



Lindsay Best-Fott



Sue Sherman



Kristy Kozun



Mirella Nardi



Who are we?

**We are entirely
operated and funded by
Alberta Blue Cross
employees.**

Hearts of Blue is an employee-run charity, meaning that we are operated and funded by Alberta Blue Cross employees. We support registered charities across Alberta through volunteering, financial donations and gifts of essential items.

We were founded in 1998, as a one-time event to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Alberta Blue Cross. However, the idea of establishing an employee-run charity proved to be so popular that it continued past that and is an essential part of our community involvement, even now, over 20 years later.

In 2019, Hearts of Blue contributed over \$45,000 to charities across Alberta.

In addition, we enabled nearly 100 Alberta Blue Cross employees to volunteer in their communities.

We are honoured to support our community's needs wherever they arise and however we can help—whether that means donating clothes, kitchen equipment, bus passes or even yoga equipment. In 2019, volunteers did everything from creating food hampers and serving dinners to washing windows and planting gardens!

Our objectives

We operate with four main objectives in mind.

1. To encourage staff to become involved in the communities in which they live.
2. To strengthen the team spirit of Alberta Blue Cross employees.
3. To live the values of a caring company.
4. To raise the profile of Alberta Blue Cross in the community.



ALBERTA BLUE CROSS
Hearts of Blue

Hearts of Blue

Introducing a new way to support Hearts of Blue

It's now easier than ever to donate to Hearts of Blue!

You can simply fill out our new [online form](#) to make an ongoing contribution—whether it's \$10, \$5 or even just \$1 per paycheque. Every little bit makes a difference.

Be a Hearts of Blue hero—make an ongoing contribution



Days of Giving

Employees get the opportunity to take a few hours out of their work day to support local charities. This not only gives our employees a chance to help, but also allows them to see and connect with the charities that we support. As you'll see from some of the volunteer quotes throughout, these experiences are incredibly rewarding for the volunteers, not just the organizations. To find out more or sign up for a future Days of Giving event, [email hob@ab.bluecross.ca](mailto:hob@ab.bluecross.ca).

In 2019, 37 employees took part in four Days of Giving events.



2019 Hearts of Blue in review

February

- **Days of Giving:** Seven volunteers headed to **Cinderella's Closet** to sort and organize dresses, jewelry and shoes to help girls with financial barriers have a magical graduation celebration. Hearts of Blue was also able to donate to Cinderella's Closet, collecting eight boxes full of dresses, shoes, jewelry and makeup.



“It was a really great event! The volunteer leaders were really warm and made sure we felt like we were contributing!”

— Natasha Raffa

March

- A team of nine Calgary employees sorted through food that was donated to the **Calgary Community Kitchen** from grocery stores and individual donors.
- We made a donation of hair conditioner, brushers, shaving cream, baby soothers and more than 40 suitcases to **Lurana Shelter**, which supports and protects women and their children from domestic violence.
- Donated essential items to **WIN House**.



March 8, 2019

Hearts of Blue (Alberta Blue Cross)
10009 108 Street NW
Edmonton, AB
T5J 3G5

Dear Hearts of Blue

Please accept our sincere appreciation for supporting the Lurana Shelter this year. Your generous donations of hair conditioner, brushers, shaving cream, and baby soothers definitely made a direct impact on the lives of the women and children living in our shelter. We are grateful for every donation that comes our way, but we are especially thankful for the 40-50 suitcases you donated. The suitcases will assist those clients who need to travel longer distances than usual.

The Lurana Shelter is committed to exploring alternatives with victims of family violence. Gifts in kind are important for our program as the families who stay at our shelter begin to rebuild and redirect their lives. We really depend on donations such as yours to keep our programs running and each one will be put to work right away to provide comfort and self esteem. The reasons and needs are countless and that is why it is easy for us to see how important, useful and appreciated each donation is. Your gifts help to show families that people care about them and this helps them walk forward on their paths in life.

Simply put, the goals of our program would be difficult to reach without you. How fortunate to live in such a generous community! We also appreciate the trust you afford us to make the best use of the items you have donated and we strive to do so.

Thank you on behalf of the women and children at Lurana Shelter. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 429-2002.

Sincerely,

Sarah Cornett
Executive Director

Lurana Shelter Society
Box 99540, Cromdale PO
Edmonton AB T5B 0E1
www.luranashelter.com

Exploring alternatives with victims of family violence

“We were absolutely amazed by the number of items they collect and donate to women and children in need. We were very happy to be able to donate all these items on behalf of the Hearts of Blue committee to such a wonderful organization whose mission is to further non-violent relationships and environments for women with or without children.”

– Joan Tandy

April

- **Operation Friendship Seniors Society dinner:** 16 employees, friends and family members helped serve a delicious ham meal to approximately 120 seniors.
- Brought over a new dryer to help make the day-to-day activities easier for the families temporarily living at **Compassion House** while they are battling cancer.
- Hearts of Blue donated \$1,000 to **Food for Thought**—a charity that provides healthy meals for kids in Edmonton schools.
- Donated 26 chairs to **PrayerWorks** to help make it possible for more folks living in the inner-city to take part in their meal program.
- Purchased two riding saddles for the **Little Bits Therapeutic Riding Association**—an association that provides recreational riding programs for persons with disabilities.





May

- **Days of Giving:** Eight Alberta Blue Cross volunteers journeyed to **Little Warriors' Be Brave Ranch** and got their hands dirty cleaning out garden beds, washing windows and planting a garden. Hearts of Blue also donated two laptops to **Little Warriors**.
- Hearts of Blue had the honour of donating three new four-person tents to **Kids on Track** to help teens explore the Alberta rockies and lake country this summer.
- Donated over 10 boxes of clothing to each of **WIN House, Candora Society, Kindred House** and **Ermineskin Women's Shelter**.
- Hearts of Blue brought over pots, pans, measuring cups, spoons, glasses, bedding sheets, décor and hygiene products like deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste and toothbrushes to the **Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)—Calgary Region**. Hearts of Blue also donated blankets that staff can use to comfort clients in need.





“This was my first Days of Giving and it was such a wonderful experience. Before going out to the ranch, I had heard of Little Warriors and knew they supported children who had been victims of sexual abuse. I did not know the extent of the services they provide to these children. The statistics that were provided to us during the tour were shocking. It was a very nice feeling to give something back, even though quite small, to such an amazing organization.”

—Colleen Christie, first-time Days of Giving volunteer

June

- **Operation Friendship Seniors Society dinner:** 14 employees, friends and family members helped serve a delicious ham meal to approximately 120 seniors. Hearts of Blue also made a donation of 30 canisters of coffee to a very appreciative **Operation Friendship Seniors Society**.
- Donated a high-power blender and other equipment to **Meals on Wheels**.
- Three employees put their green thumbs to work planting flowers in the **Compassion House** garden.
- Eight Alberta Blue Cross employees went to **Robinson Outreach at RiverCross Ranch (ROARR)** to host a group of 18 seniors from Big Hill Lodge in Cochrane. Arriving early, they set up flower arrangements and place settings, prepared food and got the horses ready to be admired. They served the seniors lunch with delicious pies for dessert, played bingo outside on the patio with refreshing beverages and brought the therapy horses out for some petting.
- Brought 20 cans of baby formula plus some baby teething cookies to the **St. Albert Food Bank**.
- Donated baby supplies to **The Alex—Youth Health Centre** in Calgary, including diapers, cream, breast pads, milk storage bags, blankets, feeding covers, bottles, wash cloths and gift cards.



“Thanks again for buying this for us. It’s going to be so useful! The blender will help make about 250 to 275 pureed and minced meals each week, while the multi-bakers will give us the option to have some new, unique sandwiches in rotation, and allow us to cook our breakfast omelets a different way.”

– Caitlin, Meals On Wheels.



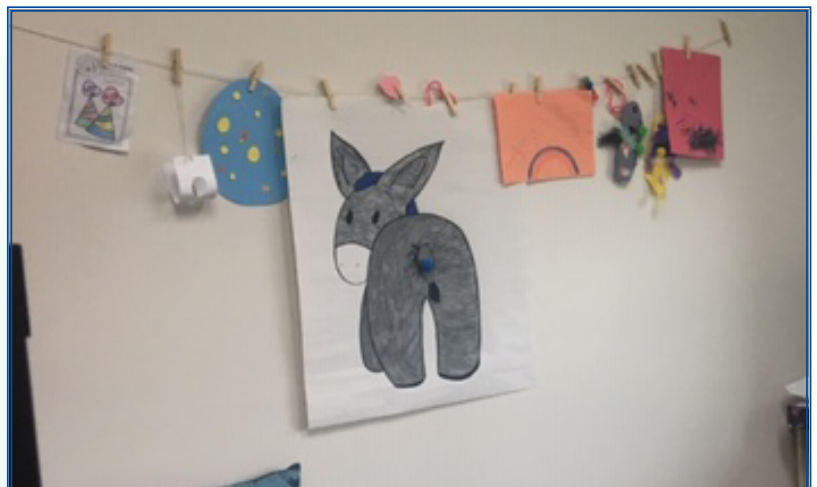


July

- Dropped off a variety of items to **Today's Family Violence Centre**, including craft materials, journals, self-care items and even movie passes.



“Your gift of self-care products will help us celebrate, with each woman who receives a self-care package, the courage it took for her to walk through the doors of the Today Centre, believing that positive change is possible! The journals are great tools for victims of family violence to be able to self-reflect and heal. Gifts for our child-minding room will help children feel safe and comfortable in our space and the movie tickets will help support parents to unwind with their children. These gifts have a great impact on the women, men and children we serve, and we cannot thank you enough for the thought in the selection of donations you provided.”



August

- The annual Blue Sky Grill was a blast! We also raised \$1,625 for the **Rainbow Society of Alberta**.
- Held a mug drive for **Operation Friendship Seniors Society**.
- Donated 20 yoga straps, 20 green foam yoga blocks and 20 black foam brick yoga blocks to assist in the **Cerebral Palsy Association** in Alberta's gentle movement yoga classes.
- Gave **Kindred House** some basic items such as ladies' socks and underwear, bus tickets, toiletries and household items.
- Made a donation to the **Autism Asperger Friendship Society**, including Lego kits, dominoes, puzzles, board and card games, as well as some arts and crafts supplies such as canvases, paint, brushes, bath bomb making kits, scrapbooking and stone coloring kits. Also provided were some kitchen and baking supplies and a microwave!



September

- **Days of Giving:** 12 volunteers sorted food and created food hampers. Hearts of Blue also made a \$500 donation to the **Edmonton Food Bank**.
- Collected books for **Calgary Reads**.



“I enjoyed the Days of Giving opportunity at the Edmonton Food Bank. It felt rewarding giving back to the city and the community. All the volunteers and workers at the Edmonton Food Bank were so helpful and told us how much they appreciated us being there. It was also a great chance to get to know fellow Alberta Blue Cross employees that I might not normally have gotten a chance to meet. An afternoon well spent!”

— Roxanne Hoogewoonik

October

- **Operation Friendship Seniors Society dinner:** 15 Alberta Blue Cross employees, friends and family helped serve a delicious turkey dinner to approximately 250 very appreciative seniors.
- We also supported **Operation Friendship Seniors Society** in their Socktober campaign to collect 10,000 pairs of warm winter socks for their drop-in centre.



November

- Donated iPads with keyboards to two local seniors' facilities—the **St. Michael's Health Group's Millennium Pavilion Seniors Lodge** in north Edmonton and the **Shepherd's Care Foundation** residence in south Edmonton. The iPads were taken out of service from Alberta Blue Cross and completely reconditioned by Technical Services for donation to charity through Hearts of Blue.
- Visited **AdaptAbilities** to deliver \$1,000 in Edmonton Transit tickets.



"This is a huge help! The children, youth and adults with disabilities that we serve love to be out in the community—these passes help make inclusion happen!"

– Rich Horning, director of Development and Communications, AdaptAbilities



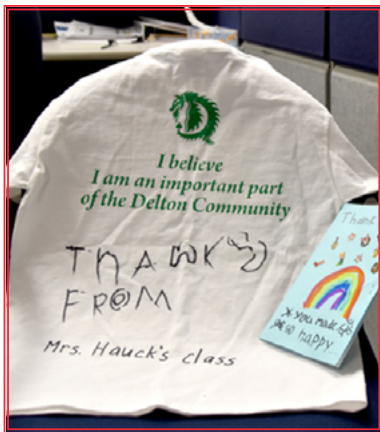
December

- **Days of Giving:** 10 volunteers went to **Families First Society** and made a big batch of chili and cheese biscuits, along with three huge banana loaves and a few dozen pumpkin muffins. We also donated approximately \$450 worth of diapers.
- Purchased 28 gifts for the **Central Alberta Victim & Witness Support** organization (Red Deer) Christmas celebration.
- Bought 350 lbs. of food for the **Calgary Food Bank**.
- Bought toys, books and art supplies for the **Salvation Army (Calgary)**.
- Donated assorted kitchenware, towels, blankets, coffee, laundry baskets and Tim Hortons gift cards to the **Sage Seniors Safe House**.
- Purchased toys for the **Terra Centre's** annual family Christmas party.
- Delivered more than 10 metres of cream-coloured fleece fabric to **Angel Dresses**.
- Donated gift cards to help the **Sacred Heart Church of First Peoples** gather items for their 552 food hampers.
- Delivered gifts of hoodies and pyjama sets to 19 students at **Delton School**.
- Made a donation to **Basically Babies**, including
 - 66 pairs of socks,
 - 42 sleepers,
 - 24 receiving blankets,
 - 24 pairs of tights,
 - 18 hooded towels, and
 - 16 bibs.
- Collected warm, cozy mitts, hats, jackets and clothing for the **Santas Anonymous** toy drive, supporting **Youth Empowerment and Support Services (YESS)**.

“This was my first time volunteering with Hearts of Blue and it was a wonderful experience! We were given the opportunity to support the Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society. It was amazing to hear of all the work this organization does for their local community and I was reminded of just how powerful selflessness is on others’ lives.”

– Matthew Howat





Hearts of Blue Corporate Support

2019 Statement of Account January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019

Carry forward balance from 2018:		\$20,372.91
Corporate Allocation		\$14,188.18
Reimbursement for BSG Expenses (transfer from Employee Account)		\$1,907.89
Rainbow Society - Casual for a Cause August 14 proceeds		\$1,625.00
Rounding difference from Nov 29 \$1000 cash advance for Calgary Food Bank and Salvation Army, total donations were \$992.83, \$7.15 was returned and deposited to Corporate Acct (out \$0.02 due to rounding)		(\$0.02)
Fundraising		\$0.00
Donations	1st Qtr 2019:	
	None	
	2nd Qtr 2019:	
	April - Operation Friendship Seniors Society	\$750.00
	April - Edmonton Food Bank	\$1,000.00
	May - Champion Centre (Medicine Hat Branch)	\$1,000.00
	May - The Boys and Girls Club of Lethbridge (Lethbridge Branch)	\$999.15
	June - Odyssey Club (Grande Prairie Branch)	\$1,000.00
	June - Operation Friendship Seniors Society	\$750.00
	3rd Qtr 2019:	
	September - Rainbow Society	\$1,625.00
	September - Edmonton Food Bank	\$500.00

4th Qtr 2019:

October - Operation Friendship Seniors Society	\$900.00
November - Central Alberta Victim & Witness Support Org. (Red Deer Branch)	\$1,025.76
December - Operation Friendship Seniors Society	\$900.00
December - Families First Fort Sask - DOG Event	\$87.77
December - Calgary Food Bank	\$491.34
December - Salvation Army	\$501.49
December - Sage Seniors Association	\$146.93
December - YESS	\$948.28
December - Adopt a Teen	\$1,030.00
December - Centre for Family Literacy	\$976.81
December - Basically Babies	\$1,021.86

Total Donations made for the year:	(\$15,654.39)
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Bank fees	Monthly fee	(\$70.00)	
	Monthly fee rebate	\$70.00	
	Credit Interest	\$6.15	
Expenses	Regent Signs (custom stickers)	\$56.70	
	Elite Promotional Marketing (T-Shirt Order)	\$1,097.25	
	Blue Sky Grill expenses	\$1,907.89	
	Parking for October 2 DOG Event	\$35.00	
	Cheque order	\$137.46	(\$3,234.30)
Funds available as of December 31, 2019:			\$19,211.42

Hearts of Blue Employee Support

2019 Statement of Account January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019

Carry forward balance from 2018:		\$13,712.51
Donations	1st Qtr 2019 (January to March)	\$4,164.67
	Payroll deductions	\$3,167.65
	The Nut Man	\$101.74
	United Way donation	\$740.57
	The Benevity Community Impact Fund	\$14.71
	IBM	\$140.00
	2nd Qtr 2019 (April to June)	\$3,854.71
	Payroll deductions	\$3,623.34
	The Nut Man	\$216.37
	Cash donation	\$15.00
	3rd Qtr 2019 (July to September)	\$5,122.17
	Payroll deductions	\$3,100.19
	United Way donation	\$641.98
	Jury duty donation	\$200.00
	Individual donation	\$1,000.00
	IBM	\$180.00
	4th Qtr 2019 (October to December)	\$7,971.81
	Payroll deductions	\$3,400.38
	Casual for a Cause	\$3,608.30
	United Way donation	\$641.98
	The Nut Man	\$121.15
	IBM	\$200.00
Fundraising		
Total contributions received thus far for the year:		\$21,113.36
	1st Qtr 2019:	
	January - Cinderella's Closet	\$176.32
	February - John Howard Society	\$993.22
	March - Elizabeth Fry	\$958.43
	March - WIN House	\$1,003.25
	March - Lurana Shelter Society	\$1,196.98
	March - Prayer Works	\$1,007.94
	2nd Qtr 2019:	
	April - Little Bits	\$945.00
	April - Compassion House	\$1,089.90
	May - Kids on Track	\$1,322.79
	May - WIN House	\$1,091.01
	May - Canadian Mental Health	\$483.81

May - Terra Centre	\$500.00	
May - Little Warriors	\$1,020.98	
May - St. Elizabeth Seaton	\$994.42	
May - Crystal Kids Centre	\$1,495.20	
June - Suicide Prevention Resource Centre (GP)	\$1,000.00	
June - Meals on Wheels	\$1,089.30	
June - Operation Friendship Seniors Society	\$217.24	
June - The Alex	\$502.26	
3rd Qtr 2019:		
July - Old Strathcona Youth Society	\$944.91	
July - St. Albert Food Bank	\$561.79	
July - Today's Family Violence Centre	\$994.84	
August - Cerebral Palsy Association of Alberta	\$570.00	
August - Kindred House	\$845.75	
August - Autism Asperger Friendship Society	\$996.33	
4th Qtr 2019:		
October - Blankets of Love	\$923.73	
October - Families First Society - Fort Sask. (for DOG)	\$441.00	
November - Adapatabilities	\$985.00	
November - Pilgrims Hospice	\$1,019.64	
November - Delton School	\$803.92	
November - Santa's Anonymous	\$500.00	
November - Terra Centre	\$454.17	
December - Operation Friendship	\$105.05	
December - Angel Dresses	\$271.90	
December - Sacred Heart	\$1,000.00	
Total donations made for the year:		(\$29,495.63)
Bank fees	Monthly fee	(\$60.00)
	Monthly fee rebate	\$60.00
	Credit interest	\$3.32
Expenses	Stop payment fee	(\$12.50)
	Gift cards for Calgary Committee Members	(\$35.00)
	Cheque order	(\$137.46)
Transfers	Corporate Allocation	\$14,188.18
	Transfer Corporate Allocation to Corporate Account	(\$14,188.18)
	Corporate Reimbursement BSG Expenses	\$1,907.89
	Transfer BSG expenses to Corporate Account	(\$1,907.89)
Funds available as of December 31, 2019:		\$5,148.60



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