

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 22, 2022

Alberta Blue Cross[®] continues to support community organizations through COVID grant program

Based on the continued need for support, Alberta Blue Cross has brought back its popular COVID Community Roots Program for 2022.

Since this program launched in 2020, Alberta Blue Cross has awarded a total of \$262,000 to 59 diverse projects in rural and remote communities across Alberta. Applications for the 2022 COVID Community Roots Programs will open on April 4.

More than \$81,000 has been given to 20 organization in central Alberta, including the Mary C. Moore Public Library in Lacombe, the SMILES Nonprofit Society in Millet, the Rimbey Neighbourhood Place Society, the Vegreville and District Family and Community Support Services and four projects in Edson. Some of the funded projects in 2021 include the following:

- The Town of Hanna—to utilize existing outdoor and community facilities to bring residents together and reconnect with nature while following COVID-19 guidelines.
- Edson LEAP Society—to partner with current programs and organizations in town to enrich environments, allow access to community life and support existing programs.
- The Village of Donalda—to create a community garden that will create a sustainable, long-term and low-cost food program for residents while also offsetting the community food bank.

More than \$110,000 has been given to 25 organizations in southern Alberta, including the Redwood Meadows Community Association, the Grasslands School Division, the Exshaw Library Society and the YMCA of Lethbridge. Some of the projects funded in 2021 include the following:

- Agriculture for Life Inc.—to fund a junior garden program from March to October, designed to engage Foothills youth in growing their own food and harvesting and cooking fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Exshaw Library Society—to fund the BIN-GENIOUS project, which grants safe access to library resources to parents in the Hamlet of Exshaw, the greater Municipal District of Bighorn and of the adjacent Stoney Nakoda First Nation.
- Town of Strathmore—to support a community garden that will be a collaborative space for physical and mental wellness, socialization, cultural knowledge sharing, natural spaces and intergenerational learning.

Finally, more than \$71,000 has been given to 16 organizations in northern Alberta, including the Boys and Girls Club of Whitecourt and District, Fort McKay Women's Association, Bezanson Agricultural Society, Fairview Fine Arts Society, Grand Prairie and District Catholic Schools Education Foundation, Wolverines Wheelchair Sports Association, Little Red River Cree Nation Health Services, Dene Tha' Recreation and Cultural Society, Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council, Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Chipewyan Prairie Dene First Nation and Whitecourt. Some of the funded projects include the following:

- Grande Cache Community Outreach Program—to create mini pop-up gardens that will help address food security and address the mental health benefits of gardening.
- Fort McKay First Nation—to buy supplies and equipment to start up programs and camps again, run by local community members, and ensure they complied with COVID-19 safety measures.

ab.bluecross.ca

Edmonton Blue Cross Place 10009 108 Street NW T5J 3C5 780-498-8000	Calgary Main Floor 715 5 Avenue SW T2P 2X6 403-234-9666	Grande Prairie Suite 108 10126 120 Avenue T8V 8H9 780-532-3505	Lethbridge 470 Chancery Court 220 4 Street S T1J 4J7 403-328-1785	Medicine Hat 95 Carry Drive Plaza 105 Carry Drive SE T1B 3M6 403-529-5553	Red Deer 103 Elements at Rivers Edge 5002 55 Street T4N 7A4 403-343-7009
--	---	--	---	---	--



- The 4 Wings Military Family Resource Centre Society—to purchase chairs and other sanitation products to safely open the society’s resource centre, which serves military families and other residents of the Cold Lake area.

See a complete list of funded projects at ab.bluecross.ca/aboutus/community-roots-funded-projects.php.

To support services in rural and remote communities, the COVID Community Roots Program offers grants of up to \$3,000 for grassroots, community-led initiatives.

“These projects are helping to support the social, mental, emotional and physical well-being of people and communities across Alberta through the pandemic,” says Brian Geislinger, vice-president of Corporate Relations, Alberta Blue Cross. “We’re so glad to be able to support these initiatives.

“We’ve received incredible feedback on the difference this program has made in supporting our communities through this challenging time.”

Alberta Blue Cross created the COVID Community Roots Program in mid-2020. The program is funded through its community foundation and is administered in partnerships with the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association and Communities Choosewell, who help promote the program and review applications.

The application process for the 2022 COVID Community Roots Program opens April 4. Organizations eligible to apply include non-profits, charities, municipalities, First Nations communities and Métis Settlements. Unregistered organizations may apply with a partner organization. Interested organizations can find more information and apply online at ab.bluecross.ca/aboutus/community-roots.

-30-

For more information, please contact Sheena Moore, communication officer, Corporate Communications, Alberta Blue Cross, at shmoore@ab.bluecross.ca.



©* The Blue Cross symbol and name are registered marks of the Canadian Association of Blue Cross Plans, an association of independent Blue Cross plans. Licensed to ABC Benefits Corporation for use in operating the Alberta Blue Cross Plan.
© † Blue Shield is a registered trade-mark of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. ABC 31262 2016/05

