

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 16, 2021

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

Based on the continued need for support, Alberta Blue Cross has extended its popular COVID Community Roots Program into 2021.

Alberta Blue Cross received 156 applications for the program in 2020 and awarded a total of \$195,000 to 45 projects in 38 different communities across Alberta. The program is now being extended to the end of June.

More than \$45,600 of this was received by 11 organizations in central Alberta, including the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc, Shine Lloydminster, Samson Youth and Sport Development, Park Valley Pool, Leduc County, Devon and two projects in Edson. Some of the funded projects include the following:

- Louis Bull Tribe—to rebuild a community rodeo project and bring together local people to create entertainment for tribe citizens.
- Hinton Friendship Centre—to provide outdoor equipment and additional materials for a program that helps at-risk and vulnerable youth, allowing it to continue to run throughout the pandemic.
- Thorsby Family and Community Support Services—to support in purchasing four laptops to help make virtual workshops more accessible for families.

More than \$66,900 of the total funding was received by 15 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:

- 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.
- 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.
- The Clymont Community League—to support the community in safely maintaining the community outdoor rink.

Finally, more than \$81,000 of the total funding was received by 19 organizations in southern Alberta, including Building Brains Together, Chinook Arch Regional Library, Town of Vauxhall Library, Calgary Storm Youth Basketball Association, Lethbridge College: Be Fit For Life, Medicine Hat Adaptive Sport and Recreation, Boys and Girls Club of Foothills, Longview ARC Society, Anzac Family Community Support Society, Heartland Community Association, Banff Housing Corporation, The Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, Taber, Drumheller, Canmore and Banff. Some of the funded projects include the following:

- South Country Treatment Centre—to support programs for life skills, horticulture therapy and art and music for people with addictions at this residential substance abstinence facility.

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- Redcliff Senior Citizens Society—to support cleaning and sanitization products and protocols required to continue enable social events when safe to do so.
- Grasslands School Division in Brooks—to support the ‘walking school bus’ program, which helps kids get to school safely when busses aren’t running.

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 \$5,000 for grassroots, community-led initiatives serving vulnerable populations during the pandemic.

“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.”

As part of its \$500,000 commitment to supporting communities through the impact of the pandemic and low energy prices on the provincial economy, 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 2021 COVID Community Roots Program open March 1. Organizations eligible to apply include non-profits, charities, municipalities, First Nations communities and Metis 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.

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For more information, please contact Katelyn Pretzlaff, communications officer, Corporate Communications, Alberta Blue Cross, at 780-498-8846 or kpretzla@ab.bluecross.ca.



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