

VISION2020



Threads of Life Annual Report

CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Bill Stunt

One of our Threads of Life family members recently wrote that “we are called to live our lives in the forward; however, I can only understand my life if I am willing to go back and visit the past.” This 2020 annual report is a similar exercise – drawing highlights and lessons from the year behind us, and looking ahead to where Threads of Life will go next.

For many of us at Threads of Life, the organization’s vision statement is our rallying cry. It represents a future we long for. While we hold that future state up like a flag, we also need to be looking closely at what it means and what we’re doing day to day to achieve it.

2020 was a year most were eager to put behind them – a year filled with many challenges and losses. Yet there were positives too, if we look for them. Threads of Life was well-positioned to adapt to the restrictions and changes brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. Most staff were already working in home offices, and were accustomed to planning projects, and supporting volunteers and members, at a distance. One of our cornerstone programs, Volunteer Family Guides, has always connected people mainly by phone, so it was able to continue as usual. There were programs Threads of Life had been considering, such as online workshops. The pandemic sped up the timelines so that the first virtual family forum came together in the fall of 2020, and monthly online FamiliesConnect workshops launched in January 2021.

Our board of directors continued to work, meeting on Zoom from our kitchens, spare rooms and home offices. Thank you to all our board members for your hard work and adaptability. Thank you to our family members, partners, and volunteers for your energy, patience, and above all, for your vision.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(as of December 31, 2020)

BILL STUNT *Chair*
Family Member, Ontario

PETER DEINES *Vice Chair*
CEO, CannAmm Occupational Testing Services, Alberta

JACKIE MANUEL *Treasurer*
CEO Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association, Newfoundland and Labrador

WALLY POWER *Secretary*
Family Member, Nova Scotia

SEAN ALGER *Director*
SVP Corporate Services, Ledcor, Alberta

SHELLY DAUPHINEE *Director*
Professor and Independent Workers’ Compensation & OHS Advisor, Nova Scotia

TRACEY MINO *Director*
Family Member, Ontario

WENDY-ELLEN NITTEL *Director*
Family Member, Alberta

ERIN PITRUZZELLA *Director*
Family Member Ontario

ELEANOR WESTWOOD *Director & Past Chair*
Manager (retired), Communications, Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS), Ontario



Left -right: Shirley Hickman, Eleanor Westwood, Bill Stunt, Jackie Manuel, Peter Deines, Wendy-Ellen Nittel, Shelly Dauphinee, Erin Pitruzzella, Tracey Mino, Wally Power, absent: Sean Alger.

OUR VISION

Threads of Life will lead and inspire a culture shift as a result of which work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths are morally, socially and economically unacceptable.



Even in the depths of their pain and grief, when they're feeling angry and hopeless, Threads of Life members feel the pull of this vision statement. They desperately, passionately want to spare other families the physical and emotional agony that a work-related injury, illness or death has brought to them. Threads of Life's partners and volunteers, too, unite behind this idea of culture change; of an end to workplace tragedy.

An organization's vision statement is meant to be inspiring and challenging. But in difficult times, like those we faced in 2020, it also helps the organization navigate and make decisions about which direction is best – a bit like the north star.

Threads of Life exists to help families affected by workplace tragedies. And side-by-side with those families, we steer always towards our ultimate destination: a world in which work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths are morally, socially and economically unacceptable.

IMPACT 2020

124

new family members joined Threads of Life in spite of the pandemic's disruption

320

people actively volunteered for Threads of Life

2080

people including many young workers heard our speakers' stories in 2020

114

partners continued their sponsorship support when Steps for Life went all virtual

OUR WORK

Family Forums are a highlight every year – a chance for those affected by tragedy to gather, learn new coping skills, and meet others willing to walk beside them on their journey of healing.

For 2020, three regional family forums were rolled into our first-ever National Virtual Family Forum (NVFF) event. Our partners helped to spread the word, and the NVFF provided light during a dark time for more than 250 family members, volunteers and guests.

PEOPLE WITH VISION: TARA



TARA SCHRAMA is a new Threads of Life family member.

Tara battles with scleroderma from exposure to silica dust in her job as a geologist. Unable to work, she was feeling lost and disconnected. She learned about Threads of Life through a case manager, and attended the National Virtual Family Forum. She was relieved and happy to meet others who have a similar experience with work-related illness. Now her goal is to become an advocate for workplace health and safety.

“I want to talk to others so they don’t go through what I went through.”

IMPACT

National Virtual Family Forum

15 New family members joined Threads of Life in spite of the pandemic’s disruption

200+ Existing and new family members connected through sessions at the NVFF

VISION

What’s Ahead

The success of the virtual family forum led to monthly online workshops starting in January 2021, called FamiliesConnect. Our vision is to return to regional in-person forums, augmented by online events offering more opportunities to connect, particularly for those in remote areas or unable to travel.

When the pandemic struck, Threads of Life's Volunteer Family Guides (VFGs) were already ideally positioned to sustain and increase their services for families affected by work-related tragedy. The VFG program has always been offered primarily by phone, to overcome the challenges of geography and still connect people who share common experience. Our trained Volunteer Family Guides are the heart of Threads of Life's family support. In 2020 we were able to take their work a step further, training a group of 12 in advanced peer support, helping them develop deeper understanding of peer support relationships. Many of these volunteers will use their skills to lead workshops online, and in person in the future.

IMPACT VFGs

PEOPLE WITH VISION: JOANNE



JOANNE WADE is a Threads of Life family member and a long-time Volunteer across all programs.

“Our training as Volunteer Family Guides reiterates the importance of listening, enhances our listening skills and teaches us to appreciate silence, and to be sensitive to non-verbal communication. When I facilitated my first virtual workshop, I felt nervous but once I started, I relaxed and felt I had a good connection with the participants. I felt good about the experience and hopefully I will have an opportunity to facilitate another session in the future. **Each training session increases my knowledge and skills, and helps ensure my son's death was not for nothing.** With what I learn, I feel I am more effective in my role in the prevention of workplace tragedies.”

IMPACT Being There

There's a kind of support Threads of Life offers that's hard to label. We think of it as simply “being there” - members being there for one another; staff and volunteers doing their best to fill whatever needs arise.

PEOPLE WITH VISION: EUGENE



EUGENE GUTIERREZ is a Threads of Life family member, a Steps for Life volunteer and a member of the speaker's bureau.

“Attending my father's Inquest hearing - closing that painful and tragic chapter - was such a challenging, stressful, and emotional time in my life. Fortunately, the Threads of Life community and staff were there for me every step of the way. They provided me with valuable guidance and emotional support throughout my 3-year journey in obtaining the closure that I needed, for which I am eternally grateful. **Threads of Life is more than just a support organization - they are a part of my family,** now and forever. I don't know what I'd do without them.”

PEOPLE WITH VISION: JADE



“Hi, I am Jade, one of the students who heard Russell Claus’ presentation. Hearing Russell speak I was startled by how easily things can go wrong. Just one small thing caused such major events in multiple people’s lives. I was also shocked by the recovery time. I knew it would take a while but it didn’t really cross my mind that it would take as long as he said. When he talked about the emotional parts of recovery, that really captured my attention. Most people when they think about an injury, they think about the physical recovery but never the emotional side. His story made me realize you have to heal not only physically but emotionally.

In the future when I get a career, I will pay much more attention to the safety aspect of things. As someone in high school you feel in a way, kind of invincible. You don’t think that something like that will happen to you. When I’m working I will try my best to make sure everyone around me is safe.

Thank you Russell for giving me the opportunity to hear this story!”

Spring is traditionally the busiest time for volunteers in our Threads of Life speaker’s bureau. When COVID-19 closed workplaces and ended in-person gatherings, we cancelled dozens of bookings. We know our speaker volunteers have the greatest impact when they’re interacting with an audience face to face. However, since that wasn’t possible, we opened the door to virtual presentations and a number of schools and organizations met our speakers online. In 2020 roughly 2080 people had the chance to see and hear our family members’ stories either in person early in the year, or virtually. This was a quarter of the previous years’ audience.

IMPACT

**SPEAKERS’
BUREAU**

41

Virtual and in-person presentations

2,080

People heard our speakers’ stories

VISION

What’s Ahead

In 2021 we’re expanding our offering of virtual presentations, but we’re still eager for the day our volunteers can return to sharing their stories live and in person!

OUR WORK



Steps for Life-Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy is not only the primary fundraiser for Threads of Life; it's also a vital way Threads of Life can reach new families and spread commitment to strong workplace health and safety cultures. In-person walks were cancelled, but under our hashtag #MyWhyMyWay, people across Canada walked, ran, biked, danced, jumped and played for Steps for Life. We can't say enough thank yous to our volunteers who switched gears overnight to support a virtual walk, our sponsors who came through with their sponsorships despite everything, and our wonderful participants.

PEOPLE WITH VISION: JANE



JANE CRAWFORD participated in Steps for Life for the first time in 2020.

"I am truly inspired by the amazing volunteers who choose to help individuals, employees and families through Threads of Life. The impacts of an occupational disease, workplace injury or fatality can have a rippling effect within an organization, community and family, therefore the education, awareness and support available through the association is an invaluable asset across Canada.

The majority of my immediate and extended family are dedicated tradespeople. My brother, uncles and cousins have followed in my father's footsteps and became

Boilermakers with Local 73. They chose a very rewarding career but it can also be extremely dangerous. They perform physically demanding tasks while working with extreme heat, in cramped, wet and noisy spaces while using heavy equipment and machinery.

I chose the 10K Dance Challenge as #MyWhyMyWay because dancing is not only fun, it's also a great form of exercise. Like many Canadians, I found myself working from home last year and quickly realized I was not getting nearly as much physical activity. I decided to combine my love of dancing with my need to be more active and desire to contribute to such a worthwhile cause."

IMPACT Steps for Life

11,000+

Posts and shares for Steps for Life on social media

\$440,000+

Raised to help families affected by workplace tragedy

IMPACT Partnerships

Threads of Life's partners are visionary. They share our commitment to eliminating workplace tragedies, and they're willing to put their time, energy and dollars behind their passion.

Many of the usual fundraisers and awareness events that support our work were cancelled in 2020, but partners came up with new approaches like cookbooks, surveys, distanced golf tournaments, dress up days, donations in lieu of Christmas parties. In a year when many organizations faced financial challenges, we were honoured so many of our partners maintained their support for our Threads of Life family members. *Thank you all!*

43

Partners were able to participate in the National Virtual Family Forum

114

Partners continued their Steps for Life sponsorship in spite of the change from in-person to virtual events

THANKS to the Board of Registered Canadian Safety Professionals (BCRSP) four family members annually receive a huge leg up in their post-secondary studies. 2020 recipients of the BCRSP-Threads of Life scholarship are:

- Heather Baker, NB
- Carlie Gerber, ON
- Shay-Lee Jackson, MB
- April McCarthy, NL

PEOPLE WITH VISION: ANNE



ANNE TENNIER is President and CEO of the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, CCOHS has been a long-time partner with Threads of Life.

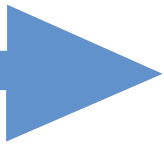
“CCOHS and Threads of Life go back almost to the beginning of when Threads of Life came into being. We share a conviction that all workplace injuries and illnesses are preventable, as well as a vision of the future where people don't get sick or die from the work they do. And while we can focus on hazards, processes and procedures, we can never forget the humanity behind health and safety and the people behind the statistics, for it is this that can inspire a workplace culture that cares for fellow workers, each and every day.”

VISION

What's Ahead

In 2021 our partners are doing more than ever to spread the word about Threads of Life's programs. With their help we work to ensure every Canadian family that could benefit from our programs is aware of Threads of Life.

THANK YOU



IMPACT Volunteers

The pandemic threw everyone's world into chaos in 2020. People lost jobs, were off work or suddenly working from home. There was isolation, distance, upheaval to routines. And through all that, our Steps for Life volunteers promoted and participated. Our Volunteer Family Guides listened and supported; our speakers shared their stories virtually. And others found different ways to volunteer and help. We often say Threads of Life is YOUR organization, and it truly would not exist without the work of our volunteers. *Thank you!*

320

Active volunteers
in 2020

3,640

Hours of volunteer work
were contributed



2020 Volunteer Awards

10-YEAR RECOGNITION OF ACTIVE & CURRENT VOLUNTEERS

Tami Helgeson
Joe Legge

Lisa Kadosa
Jackie Manuel

A COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBER OF THREADS OF LIFE

Peter Deines

Eleanor Westwood

A PARTNER OF THREADS OF LIFE

Safe Work Manitoba
Workplace Safety and Insurance Board

PROGRAM ADVANCEMENT IN FAMILY SUPPORT

Donna Green
Wynny Sillito

Rebecca Orr
Charmaine Salter

PROGRAM ADVANCEMENT IN COMMUNITY ACTION

Treena Dixon
Elaine Keunen
Tracey Mino
Erin Pitruzzella
Donna Wilkie

Karen Hermant
Lee-Anne Lyon Bartley
Don Neville
Veronica Suszynski

PEOPLE WITH VISION: ELEANOR



ELEANOR WESTWOOD *has been a board member for Threads of Life since 2006 and has served terms as chair, secretary and treasurer. She plans to retire from the board in 2021.*

“For me, listening to our brave families share their personal stories of pain and grief has impacted me most. They courageously speak from their hearts to help prevent just one more family having to walk the road I have traveled. Their voices challenge us all to do more by understanding the critical importance of each safety procedure, each safety checklist and piece of protective equipment that leads us all one step closer to making workplaces safer and illness, injury and deaths morally, socially, and economically unacceptable.”

Summary of Financial Statements

	2020 Totals	2019 Totals
ASSETS		
Current Assets	\$	\$
Cash & Marketable Securities	2,258,796	1,988,035
Accounts Receivable	71,478	17,190
Grants Receivable	0	0
GST/HST Recoverable	18,826	16,688
Prepays & Deposits	60,875	25,834
	<u>2,409,975</u>	<u>2,047,747</u>
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	47,744	55,014
Deferred Revenue	202,302	211,060
Canadian Emergency Business Account Loan	60,000	0
	<u>310,046</u>	<u>266,074</u>
FUND BALANCES		
Unrestricted Operating Reserves	2,099,929	1,781,673
	<u>2,409,975</u>	<u>2,047,747</u>

**Audited financial
information available
upon request**

	2020 Hard Costs	2020 Inkind	2020 Totals	2019 Totals
REVENUES	\$	\$	\$	\$
Grants & Awards	515,000	0	515,000	495,000
Fundraising	732,598	0	732,598	1,249,972
Inkind Donations	0	255,165	255,165	415,307
Creative Sentencing	0	0	0	150,000
Government Subsidies	295,477	0	295,477	0
Interest & Miscellaneous Income	17,708	0	17,708	19,941
	<u>1,560,783</u>	<u>255,165</u>	<u>1,815,948</u>	<u>2,330,220</u>
EXPENDITURES				
Salaries & Benefits	992,311	0	992,311	998,097
Purchased Support Services	21,723	0	21,723	31,203
Events	14,448	141,121	155,569	558,958
Publications & Printing	24,267	0	24,267	23,992
Publicity & Promotions	25,542	5,104	30,646	45,671
Volunteer Training & Programs	58,834	46,936	105,770	182,588
General & Office	21,891	0	21,891	40,179
Rent - Office & Storage	17,644	44,500	62,144	65,070
Communications	20,607	0	20,607	23,521
Meeting & Travel Expenses	19,957	0	19,957	46,478
Professional Fees	8,351	17,504	25,855	11,985
Scholarships	12,500	0	12,500	7,500
Board & Liability Insurance	4,452	0	4,452	3,886
	<u>1,242,527</u>	<u>255,165</u>	<u>1,497,692</u>	<u>2,039,128</u>
EXCESS REVENUES	<u>318,256</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>318,256</u>	<u>291,092</u>

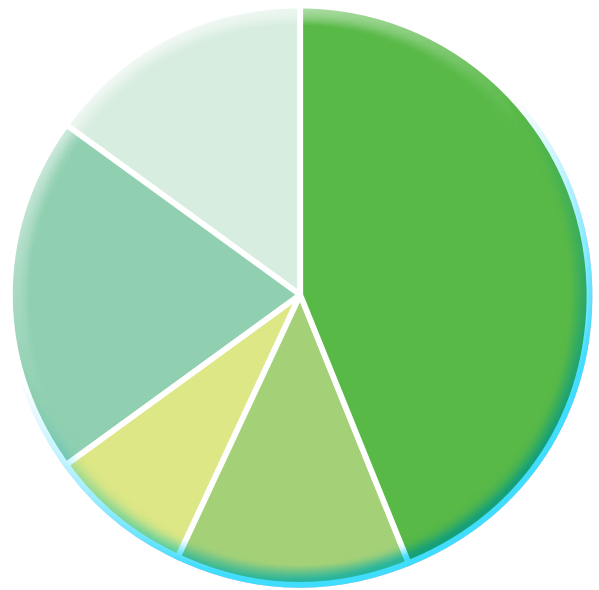


2020 Income Sources

- Steps for Life
- Grants
- In-Kind
- Donations
- Misc. Fundraising
- Sponsorship Family Forums/Youth Worker
- Investments
- Government Subsidies

2020 Program Spending

- Education
- Fundraising
- Administration
- Family Support
- Training



Threads of Life Staff

Heather Lyle	National Manager – Steps for Life
Karen Lapiere Pitts	Manager – Family Support
Kelley Thompson	Office and Administrative Assistant
Kimberly Bondame	Administrative Coordinator
Lorna Catrambone	Regional Development Coordinator and Manager – Volunteer Resources
Lynn Danbrook	Regional Development Coordinator – Western Canada (retired in December 2020)
Patti Penny	Speakers Bureau Coordinator
Sandra Hickman	Production Coordinator
Sarah Wheelan	Communications Coordinator
Scott McKay	Director – Fundraising & Partnerships
Sharon Freeman	Coordinator
Shirley Hickman	Executive Director
Susan Haldane	Manager – Marketing & Communications
Zaria Cornwall	Content Specialist

COVID-19 and Threads of Life financial statements:

The global pandemic poses the risk that the association or its members, employees, contractors, suppliers, and other partners may be unable to conduct regular activities for an indefinite period of time. Specifically, the association had to move its Steps for Life event from in person to virtual, as well as cancel all in-person family forums and move them to one virtual forum. This caused a reduction in revenues, which was partially offset by a reduction in expenses to run the events. To further offset the revenue decreases that occurred, the association applied for and received \$295,477 from the government for wage and rent subsidies. As a result of COVID-19, the organization expects a reduction in revenues for fiscal 2021 as well, but will continue to take steps to help mitigate the impact. The extent to which the COVID-19 outbreak impacts the association's future financial results will depend on future developments that are highly uncertain and cannot be predicted.

WHAT WE SEE IN THE FUTURE

And how you can help



Like you, we envision a world in which work-related tragedies no longer happen. But while we're working together towards that vision, there are families and individuals who need our help to cope with the pain and grief of a fatality, serious injury or occupational disease. Here's what you can do:

- **SPREAD THE WORD** - Tell someone who needs support about Threads of Life.
- **VOLUNTEER** - Organize a fundraiser or join a Steps for Life planning committee.
- **PARTICIPATE** - If you're a family member, come to a FamiliesConnect workshop or Family Forum. If you're a supporter, sign up for Steps for Life.
- **DONATE** - A monthly gift of as little as \$13.46 will print and mail our newsletter to 20 families in 2021. Just \$26.66 per month could send one volunteer to speaker training for a day.



THREADS OF LIFE

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Charitable organization business
#87524 8908 RR0001
Threads of Life is the Charity of Choice
for workplace health and safety events.

Threads of Life supports the UN
Sustainable Development Goals.



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