

# Mill Woods Mosaic

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The Multicultural Voice of Edmonton Southeast

Independent • Non-partisan • Interdenominational

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Titilope Sonuga worked as an engineer and is a poet, performer, playwright, and occasional actor. Jamie Chapelsky interviewed her.

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## Celebrating Punjabi Culture

Hundreds of people gathered at Mill Woods Town Centre on April 7 and 8 to celebrate "Baisakh Mela 2023."

The multicultural event included live performances, a Mrs. Punjabi competition, shopping, food, and face painting for children. The event was organized by Sigadi Events and sponsored by local businesses. Photo: Harwinder Kaur performs on stage.

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Photo: Kohli Kliciks

## Premier Smith establishes council on multiculturalism

Alberta's Premier Danielle Smith has created the Premier's Council on Multiculturalism, a council aimed at promoting multiculturalism in Alberta.

Alberta is home to people from different backgrounds, faiths and cultures. Alberta's government believes that this multiculturalism is an intrinsic part of the fabric that knits the province together. The new Premier's Council on Multiculturalism will provide advice to government to ensure that Alberta's communities become stronger and more welcoming for everyone.

The new council will advise on ways to best support, inspire and promote cultural diversity, social inclusion and educational exchanges. This work will continue to help build inclusive communities where people feel appreciated, valued and respected.

"Alberta's diversity is one of our greatest strengths and is a key pillar in building a brighter future for everyone in our province," said Smith. "Our goal is to continue shaping the province where everyone feels they belong, where a person's culture, language and religion are not only respected but also valued. I'm looking forward to the work of the new council in helping us achieve this."

Led by two co-chairs, Sumita Anand and Philomina Okeke-Ihejirika, the 30-member council will help guide Alberta's government in efforts to build stronger relationships with the diverse communities represented in the province. By creating cross-cultural awareness, understanding and appreciation, Albertans will be

better able to build new and stronger relationships.

"I am proud to announce the creation of the Premier's Council on Multiculturalism," said Rajan Sawhney, Minister of Trade, Immigration and Multiculturalism. "Multiculturalism is a key pillar of Alberta's social and economic fabric. The community leaders on this council will leverage their valuable insights and experiences to better articulate the needs, issues and concerns of the diverse communities in our province. Alberta is a beacon of opportunity and hope. We attract people from all over the world to make this province their home. This announcement is a step towards ensuring Alberta continues to be a welcoming, inclusive and safe community for all Albertans."

"Immigrant communities value their culture and heritage," said Sumita Anand, co-chair, Premier's Council on Multiculturalism. "I applaud Premier Smith and Minister Sawhney for creating this council so multicultural communities feel included to create government policies that would help assimilate them in Alberta's society."

"As a scholar, an immigrant of African descent, a female elder and the vice-chair of Alberta's largest Black-led organization, the Africa Centre, I take this call to action seriously and look forward to working with the co-chair and members of the council to support the Government of Alberta as it takes the necessary, deliberate and intentional steps to build a safe, vibrant and welcoming Alberta for us all," said Okeke-Ihejirika.

### Alberta Anti-Racism Action Plan

Alberta's government categorically condemns all forms of racism and hate. Continuous engagement and actions will be taken to ensure multiculturalism remains a pillar of Alberta's society and that everyone can call Alberta their home, free from discrimination and hate.

The Premier's Council on Multiculturalism will help supplement the work of the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council (AARAC), which was created in 2022.

In 2022, the AARAC released their report Alberta Anti-Racism Action Plan: Strengthening Diversity and Inclusion, which identified 28 action items for Alberta's government to take to encourage Albertans to be more accepting of one another. To date, seven of the action items have been completed, 12 are underway and nine are ready to be looked into and actioned. In addition to these items, Alberta's government has taken action, including ending the practice of carding, reforming the Police Act, creating the Alberta Hate Crime Coordination Unit and the Community Liaison on Hate Crime, creating the Security Infrastructure Grant program, establishing anti-racism and ethnocultural grants, and providing ethnocultural grants for trade skills and job training.

In recognition of the importance of each initiative identified in the Alberta Anti-Racism Action Plan, Premier Smith has directed the relevant ministers to complete each action item by the end of fiscal

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## Premier Smith establishes council on multiculturalism

Continued from front page

year 2023-24. To accomplish this goal, Premier Smith has committed that full funding will be made available where necessary to complete the initiatives.

"Alberta has long been known as a multicultural mosaic made up of people from different cultures, languages and ethnicities," said Kaycee Madu, Minister of Skilled Trades and Professions. "A land of opportunity, but one that still comes with challenges for racialized people in our province. Addressing racism, discrimination and inequality requires dedicated focus, and I am pleased that the Premier's Council on Multiculturalism will be working alongside Alberta's Anti-Racism Advisory Council to secure a brighter future for the next generation of Albertans."

### Quick facts

- Of the 4,177,720 people in Alberta:
  - 27.8 per cent (1,161,420) are visible minorities
  - 23.2 per cent (970,975) are immigrants
  - 6.8 per cent (284,465) are Indigenous

• The share of Albertans from different cultural backgrounds (visible minority population) has more than quadrupled to 1,161,420 in 2021 from 269,280 in 1996.

• Full Council membership includes:  
Sumita Anand (co-chair)  
Philomina Okeke-Ihejirika (co-chair)  
Ali Eltayeb  
Ali Rakka  
Alphonse Ahola  
Buta Singh Rehill  
Charles Yang  
Charlie Wu  
Dahlia Mostafa  
Ebenezer Asare  
Erick Estrada  
Hussein Warsame  
Rekha Gadhia  
Sherrisa Celis  
SunJong Chun  
Tariq Khan  
Thomas Cheuk  
WaLe Balogun  
Basir Saleh  
Gurbachan Singh Paul  
Holly Mah  
Jackie Halpern  
Jibril Ibrahim  
Justin Jimmy  
Payman Esmaili  
Rick Walters  
Rolando Inzunza  
Thomas Eapen  
Virginia Sumalinog  
Sheliza Kluge

• Council members will explore ways to:

- promote cross-cultural understanding and celebrate multicultural communities
- support innovative cultural initiatives and opportunities for diverse social interactions
- increase educational initiatives and public awareness about the importance of diversity
- increase opportunities for Indigenous people and newcomers to share their skills and talents and contribute to the growth of Alberta's economy
- create a province where everyone

feels they are included and their cultures and heritage are valued

- help implement steps outlined in the Alberta Anti-Racism Action Plan
- introduce anti-racism legislation to address disaggregated race-based data collection to combat workplace and job-related discrimination
- continue work with the federal government to improve hate crime legislation
- establish mentorship programs for internationally trained professionals

### Comments from council members

"I feel incredibly honoured and humbled to be appointed to the Premier's Council on Multiculturalism. It is a privilege to be part of this wonderful council that represents the diversity of Alberta and provides a platform for communities to voice their concerns. I will work diligently with my fellow council members to ensure that all Albertans can integrate and thrive in this province. I look forward to working with Premier Smith and the council to build a more prosperous and inclusive Alberta."

Tariq Khan

"Alberta embraces diversity and multiculturalism, understanding that many cultures helped build this province. The creation of the Premier's Council on Multiculturalism promotes collaboration among Albertans regardless of colour, language or gender and will implement innovative and inclusive initiatives. This significant endeavour will have a positive effect on Alberta's ability to attract great talents so we remain the best province in the country to live and work."

Sherrisa Celis

"It is a great honour for me and the Korean community to participate in the Premier's Council on Multiculturalism. It is a great opportunity for the Korean community to introduce Korean culture to all Albertans. I hope that our community's contribution to Alberta will continue to help grow Alberta's economy."

SunJong Chun

"I feel honoured to be a member of this council and be a voice for Alberta's multicultural communities. Being an immigrant and working with vulnerable populations in settlement and domestic violence sectors, I understand the needs, unique challenges and cultural barriers faced by these individuals, families and communities. By being a member of this council, I hope to leverage my experience to work towards bringing a positive change."

Rekha Gadhia

"As lead admission advisor and lead liaison coordinator at Columbia College for 16 years, most of my students are from multicultural communities. This experience has given me knowledge, understanding and cultural sensitivity. Playing a role in society is crucial to the growth and development of the community, building self-confidence, passion and connections."

Ali Rakka

"This council will play an important role in creating a more welcoming and

inclusive environment for all Albertans, regardless of their background or identity. I hope that the outcomes will help strengthen social cohesion and foster a sense of belonging for all residents of Alberta."

Charles Yang

"I am honoured to have been chosen to be a part of the Premier's Council on Multiculturalism. I believe in having a council of individuals of various backgrounds and experiences working together towards a common goal of enriching Canadian community as a whole."

Buta S. Rehill

"As a Mexican-Canadian living in Alberta, the opportunity to participate in this council is a great honour. I am dedicated to supporting multiculturalism and inclusion by helping build intercultural understanding and awareness to support business, trade and enhancing economic potential."

Erick Estrada

"This council recognizes the role that Canadians by choice play in our province. I believe this is a step forward that will empower and acknowledge our different communities and their needs. Such a vision from our Premier will make our communities feel that they are not left behind. I am proud to live in Alberta and proud to raise our three children in a province that values multiculturalism and diversity."

Ali Eltayeb

"Black francophone ethnocultural communities add significant cultural wealth in our province. They also face disproportionate barriers to being included in the civic community by virtue of their minority within minority status. These challenges extend beyond the current mandate of service-providing organizations and yet negatively impact on the health, social and economic outcomes of Black francophone communities. This council provides a tangible opportunity to highlight, advise on and support highly impactful initiatives/approaches that foster enhanced social cohesion and

inclusion efforts leading to a better province for us all, where all Albertans are celebrated."

Alphonse Ahola

"Former prime minister of Canada, honourable Joe Clark, once opined that 'Canada is a community of communities.' So is Alberta. The Somali, African and Muslim community that I am a member of wishes that its culture is accepted, respected and valued by the wider Albertan and Canadian communities. In turn, my community and I would strive to reciprocate that respect and appreciation and connect with the wider community. I hope that the Premier's Advisory Council on Multiculturalism would serve as a vehicle to facilitate that connection."

Hussein A Warsame

"Throughout most of my adult life, I had the opportunity to live and work in different parts of Canada. I have witnessed the transformation of our province and country over the past many decades. I strongly believe Alberta's economic success is because of how we embraced multiculturalism and made our province a welcoming home to people from around the world. This council demonstrates our commitment to continue our efforts to ensure equitable participation of all Albertans in that continuing evolution and assists in the elimination of any barriers to that participation."

Thomas Cheuk

"This is a really good initiative, especially with the mandate of the council. I am a pharmacist and an immigrant. I have been through the detailed process of making Canada my home and living a life and I believe this is a step in the right direction to ensure equal opportunities as well as identify unique needs that will not only increase awareness for First Nations and Immigrants but ensure equity as well as access to needed resources for an overall better life. I believe community members will have the voices heard and through this council, outcomes that are reflective of the ordinary Albertan will be attained."

Ebenezer Asare

## NDP Critic says: "UCP has failed cultural communities in Alberta"

Jasvir Deol, Alberta NDP Critic for Multiculturalism, made the following statement in response to Danielle Smith's comments on multiculturalism:

"Danielle Smith and the UCP have failed cultural communities in Alberta, and the late establishment of a council in the weeks before an election won't conceal those years of failure."

"The UCP has delayed the implementation of the recommendations of the Alberta NDP-created Anti-Racism Advisory Council for the past two years after they delivered their report, and cut anti-racism grants by \$4.3 million over the past four years."

"The UCP refused to even debate the

Anti-Racism Act, an Alberta NDP bill that would have established the collection of race-based data to improve public policy and services."

"Danielle Smith has still refused to apologize for her dismissal of so many Albertans' lived experience of prejudice by claiming that unvaccinated people 'were the most discriminated against people I've seen in my lifetime' or her attempt to erase the history of colonialism in Alberta."

"An Alberta NDP government will include members of many cultural groups, and we will continue to work closely with communities to address discrimination and celebrate the diversity of Alberta."



## *Alberta NDP commits to drafting Somali language and culture curriculum*

As part of her plan to better support public education, Rachel Notley announced on March 20 that an Alberta NDP government, should it be elected in May, will draft a Somali language and culture curriculum for all interested school boards.

"Providing students opportunity to learn in a variety of languages not only helps youth strengthen their ties to their cultural identity and maintain their heritage, it helps them build better language and literacy skills," said Alberta NDP Leader Rachel Notley.

"It keeps students engaged with learning, and keeps them in school. A sense of belonging inside the classroom can make a significant difference in a student's confidence and how captivated they are with their school."

Alberta currently offers 26 languages for study, outside of English and French, including Arabic, Blackfoot, Cantonese, German, Spanish, and more.

"A sense of belonging in education is so important," said Rhiannon Hoyle, Alberta NDP candidate for Edmonton-South. "To embrace the different languages and cultures of everyone that decides to come to Alberta will not only give families a sense of belonging, it strengthens our province as a whole by helping people from all walks of life succeed here."

Newcomers from African nations are the fastest growing population in Alberta with most coming from Nigeria, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia.

Data shows that of the 34,320 people who moved to Alberta from Africa between 2016 and 2021, almost half settled in Calgary.

In many towns and cities in Alberta, we are seeing a significant rise in the number of Somali refugees and immigrant students and we must support this community's important contributions to the province," said Sharif Haji, Alberta NDP candidate for Edmonton-Decore.

"With language and cultural barriers, Somali youth can experience frustration with education and unfortunately many drop out of school. We must provide opportunities for young Albertans from all backgrounds to flourish in the classroom."

Abdirahman Ibrahim, a parent in the Somali community in Edmonton, said that learning one's mother tongue not only helps connect children to their cultural heritage, it allows them to understand and appreciate the customs, traditions, and values of their ethnic community.

"Being able to communicate with family is vital. It helps youth maintain relationships with grandparents or other relatives who may only speak the mother tongue, which strengthens family bonds," Ibrahim said. "Overall, learning one's mother tongue is an important way for children to connect with their cultural heritage, maintain family relationships, and potentially gain cognitive and professional advantages later in life."



Rhiannon Hoyle, Alberta NDP candidate for Edmonton South, speaks during the press conference on March 20 where Rachel Notley (left) promised that an Alberta NDP government, should it be elected in May, draft a Somali language and culture curriculum for all interested school boards.

Photo: Alberta NDP

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## Mill Woods Mosaic

The Multicultural Voice of Edmonton Southeast  
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The Mill Woods Mosaic publishes a variety of opinions.  
Unsigned editorials express the view of the publisher.  
Signed pieces express the views of the writers only.

## Our Opinion

### Is Mill Woods a dangerous place?

On April 12, a woman was run over in a shopping centre parking lot in Mill Woods. A GM Hummer H3 truck collided with a female pedestrian, who had tripped and fallen to the ground while walking in the parking lot. The pedestrian was pronounced dead on scene. And on April 13, at 6:15 a.m., a 48-year-old man, who was sitting at a bus stop in the Millbourne area, was stabbed in the back by a suspect and taken to hospital with serious injuries.

Does this mean that Mill Woods is a dangerous place where we can't even walk in a shopping centre parking lot or sit at a bus stop without being attacked?

The leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, Pierre Poilievre, wants us to believe that there is a "out of control crime wave in Alberta after eight years of Justin Trudeau and Liberal catch and release bail policies."

Nothing could be further from the truth.

It can not be denied that crime is a problem in Edmonton, like in any other bigger city, but Mill Woods is probably one of the safest neighbourhoods in this city.

As citizens of this city, we should not allow to be scared by politicians who have a law-and-order agenda and want to distract us from more important issues, like lack of affordable housing, the climate crisis, and unemployment.



April 30 is always an important date for Canadians who have an income: the deadline for filing income tax returns for the year 2022. This can be a painful experience for taxpayers who are struggling with the paperwork and owing quite a bit of money.

Cartoon by Susan Moshynski ([www.bythebay.squarespace.com](http://www.bythebay.squarespace.com))

## Home, Sweet Home! There's no place like home!

We often talk about the importance of having a home and how difficult life is for people who don't have a home. We call them "homeless people", but recently they have been called "houseless people" or "people experiencing homelessness." It is a shame that a rich city like Edmonton has more than 3,000 people who don't have stable, safe, and functional housing, but there are many vacant buildings and too many expensive condominiums which can be afforded only by people with higher incomes.

But there is another form of "homelessness." There are many immigrants and refugees, who come to Canada and don't feel at home right away, because they have left their homelands and have difficulties to adjust to the new environment, culture, and lifestyle here in Canada.

When I immigrated to Canada, it was not difficult for me to adjust, because I grew up in Germany where the mainstream culture and the climate were similar, and I did not experience a language barrier, because I started learning English in Grade 5 which was the first year of high school in Germany.

For my wife Susan, who grew up in the Philippines, the transition was not that easy, because she came from a tropical country with hot weather, and it was quite a shock for her when she experienced the long and cold winter in Canada. But language was not a

problem for her either, because most Filipinos speak English, and it is medium of instruction in most schools.

Many German immigrants, who moved to Canada after the Second World War, became homesick, because

**Arnim Joop**

*From the Desk of the Publisher*



they missed their fatherland, their families and friends, and their culture. They founded these German-Canadian Clubs where they could socialize, reminisce about "the good old days" back home, eat German bratwurst, and drink German beer. Many of them never returned to Germany, because they came to Canada by ship, and flying was too expensive.

For newer immigrants, it is easier and cheaper to stay in touch with families and friends back home, because now we have Skype, FaceTime, Facebook and other social media to communicate regularly around the world.

It is interesting to see that some ethnic groups integrate better and faster than others. Some groups prefer to keep to themselves and socialize only in their clubhouses, cultural centres or places of worship, while other groups assimilate easier, and language plays an important role in this process. Those who spoke English or French already before they moved to Canada integrate easier than those who speak only their native tongue.

My wife Susan likes gardening, and she plants some vegetables every year and is quite successful with her harvest, but she misses the exotic fruits and vegetables which she enjoyed when she was a child in the Philippines where bananas and mangos grow in their backyards like apples and strawberries in Canada. She often watches videos on YouTube showing the simple life in rural areas of the Philippine Islands where people cook meals outdoors with fresh vegetables, fish or meat and rice. Some of these exotic fruits and vegetables are available in Asian grocery stores here in Canada, but they don't taste the same as back home, because they have to be refrigerated and shipped thousands of kilometres.

But some of our memories and things we are longing for are nostalgic, because our homelands have changed since we left and are no longer the

same as we remember them. Susan's hometown in the Philippine Province of Nueva Vizcaya is now much bigger than it was when she was a child, her high school has become a university, and the community is much more crowded than before. It is no longer the sleepy little town where people knew their neighbours and helped each other.

Some immigrants are dreaming of going back to their homelands when they retire after decades of working in Canada, but this dream of "going back" is often an illusion. It may work in some cases, but in many cases, the expatriates will not find what they are looking for, because the romantic world of their childhood doesn't exist anymore, because many relatives have died, friends have moved away, and the clean little town they remember is now a polluted big city.

Already 200 years ago, the American actor and dramatist John Howard Payne wrote the song "Home, Sweet Home":

*Sweet, sweet home!*

*There's no place like home.*

That is so true, because we can leave our home and find a new one, but it will never be the same.

Arnim Joop is the founder, publisher and editor of the Mill Woods Mosaic. He also publishes the Albertaner which is the only German language newspaper in Western Canada.



## Defending Our Defenders

Sadly, here we are again, mourning the death of someone tasked with our protection, but killed in a senseless act of violence. What, if anything, can we do now to avoid its repetition?

On April 10, 2023, a Quebec Provincial Police officer was stabbed to death while performing her policing duties. Weeks before, on March 16, two Edmonton Police Service officers were ambushed and fatally gunned down. In fact, since September 2022, nine police officers across Canada were killed violently while performing their daily duty.

The total number of Police officer fatalities belies their importance to us, individually and collectively. To fully understand that significance, we need to understand who these "Defenders" are, how they are generally treated by our society, and what can be done to support them.

Every community has its so-called "Defenders". They are the people who in an emergency situation typically rush into danger when everyone else is rushing away from it. They often belong to the traditional emergency response agencies: Fire, Police, and Emergency Medical Services. They may also belong, although in a less formal capacity, to emergency-related support organizations including the Red Cross and the Salvation Army.

Whether voluntarily or in a paid capacity, these emergency response agencies and their members secure for us a lifeline, which becomes invaluable during emergency situations. They ensure our safety and protect us from various calamities, while potentially risking their own life. For most of these First Responders, the risk of injury or death while performing their duties is an undesired reality but understood to be "a part of the job". By continuing to perform their hazardous duties they and their organization reflect a steadfast commitment to our protection and wellbeing.

Regrettably, their service is typically overlooked as both they and their efforts are often unappreciated, until they are desperately needed. This situation is reflected by the Media where the reporting of emergency responder's work-related injuries is often limited and fleeting. It seems as if we the Public have become accepting of such injuries, deeming them a tolerable occupational hazard in line with the old adage of "If you play with fire, you're gonna get burned". This rather common attitude is an unfortunate

reflection of our collective disengagement from those whose primary role is to defend us, or to help us survive despite our emergencies.

**Ron Kuban**

**Time Passages**



Occasionally, however, public attention is captured intensely. This typically occurs following the death of a First Responder due to negligence or criminal activity. Therefore, the slaying of each of the nine Police officers received immediate public attention and extensive show of both support and sympathy. As is often the case, First Responders from across Canada congregated to show their respect for and support to their fellow serving members, and to the fallen officers' family.

With that task done, most of us returned home to resume our daily life as if nothing has changed. In fact, each murder jarred our collective comfort zone and those tasked with our protection were once again traumatized, their morale and perhaps motivation severely affected. Indeed, statistics indicate that these fatalities have affected officer retention and recruitment.

Fortunately, emergencies are also great opportunities for positive change. This is especially the case when public and political attention is focused on the emergency's causes and outcomes. Therefore, now is a great opportunity to better support our defenders, if for no other reason, so that they can better protect us.

Unfortunately, the effort to help these defenders perform their duties safely and more efficiently is typically punted about, sidelined, or redefined by politicians and interest groups to further advance their unique agenda. The result is often band-aid solutions that fail to address a key element: Community safety and wellbeing requires teamwork, including our engagement.

For me, the first step is to recognize the invaluable service emergency responders provide us, and the context

of its provision. Without these defenders and their daily effort, our community could easily succumb to lawlessness or chaos, and our wellbeing could encounter greater risk.

We should also recognize that their daily tasks are marred by ever-increasing challenges and complexities, which demand revised strategies and added resources. I mean neither the allocation of more funds to emergency services, nor their defunding. Emergency response services today cannot fully perform their mandate on their own; they must collaborate with other agencies. I suggest greater collaboration among them.

As part of our community, we need to be better prepared to handle basic emergencies before reaching out for help. In turn, we need

to assist emergency responders, help them with their duties, and support their welfare.

Often forgotten in all of this, is the long-lasting trauma built on fear and coupled with a sense of severe loss, which is experienced by Emergency Responders. Many have lost members of their work family, perhaps even friends, and are again reminded of the risks they face. Their fear is shared by their family members. Left untreated, their trauma impacts all facets of their life at both professional and personal level. They need our encouragement and support to address their job-related emotional baggage.

Our community Defenders need our support in their demanding task.

*Ron Kuban is a long-time community volunteer and builder.*

## EPSB's Energy and Environment Strategy Edmonton Public Schools Trustee Jan Sawyer (Ward 1)

In 2019, the City of Edmonton declared a state of climate emergency. In March 2018 the Board of Trustees supported a motion to present the Division's Solar Strategy to the Province and request funding for implementation of the plan, and in May 2021 further approved a motion supporting the Division's membership in the City of Edmonton's Corporate Climate Leaders Program (CCLP). As a requirement of the Division's CCLP membership, emission reduction targets will be established for both 2025 and 2035. On April 4, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to set targets to reduce the GHG emissions by 5% by 2025 and 45% by 2035. Edmonton Public Schools' buildings and how they operate comprise the largest portion of the Division's emissions profile, at approximately 92%.

Considering projected increases in utility costs and consumption, continuing on a business as usual path forward would generate considerable challenges for the Division. What does this mean? It means we have work to do, in partnership to get it done. The plan to reduce Division emissions has been sorted into actionable short, medium and long-term goals to guide the steps forward. Many early actions are building blocks, as it is believed the success of future projects depends on these actions being put into place first. If partnership or funding opportunities arise, more complex or higher cost initiatives will be explored sooner than anticipated. The short-term plan is to prioritize low cost and low complexity initiatives to reduce emissions such as:

- Greening procurement practices and potentially purchasing utilities from renewable sources
- Exploring initiatives and grants to assist with the retrofitting of older buildings
- Investigating the feasibility of standardizing sorting stations across the Division to allow for the separation of

organics to decrease waste going to landfills

- Increasing engagement and education around CCLP with staff and students
- Implementing and enhancing behavior change initiatives through EcoSchools and other programs.

In the longer term, sustainable funding sources are key to continuing the momentum to reduce the Division's GHG emissions. In order to reach the 2035 CCLP targets, more complex and higher cost initiatives will be explored, including:

- Heat pump studies and additional solar installations
- Energy audits at administrative sites
- Working to align with national and international long-term energy transition strategies
- Transitioning to electric fleet vehicles through scheduled replacement and efficiency initiatives

- Energy performance contracts and increased building optimization efforts
- Requiring consultants and vendors to contribute to Division reduction goals
- Enhanced waste reduction efforts through zero waste initiatives and circular economy strategies

The consequences if we don't take these steps are too big to ignore. Should these initiatives proceed, our Administration estimates a total potential cost avoidance of approximately \$115 million by 2035. Just as important (and perhaps more), this is a commitment to future generations that we will be taking real steps towards climate action.

More details are in this report: **Division Energy & Environment Strategy (2023-2026)**

<https://epsb.ca/media/epsb/ourdistrict/boardoftrustees/boardmeetings/2022-23/april42023/02-DivisionEnergyandEnvironmentStrategyUpdateandEmissionReductionTargets.pdf>

If you have any questions about this, or any other concern, please feel free to contact me at trustee.jan.sawyer@epsb.ca.



Trustee Jan Sawyer

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## Working with you to build a stronger community

Hello to all the constituents in Edmonton-Ellerslie, Edmonton-Mill Woods, and Edmonton-Meadows. Spring has sprung and I hope that you and your family have had a chance to enjoy the sunshine. With the arrival of spring, we have also had several holidays. I want to take this time to wish you all a Happy Vaisakhi, Eid Mubarak, and Happy Easter to all those who are celebrating.

My colleagues and I have been meeting with constituents and we are relentlessly working hard to address your concerns. The main concerns that we have been hearing center around the worries related to inflation and the lack of accessible and available health care.

Alberta is in the midst of an inflation-

**Rod  
Loyola**

**MLA  
for  
Edmonton-  
Ellerslie**



ary crisis, one that we have not seen in 40 years. The UCP government has failed to find solutions that will alleviate the stresses faced by Albertans. Albertans are falling further behind as inflation is outpacing wage growth.

My colleagues and I are committed to advocating for real solutions to make life more affordable for you and your family.

Hospitals are in a crisis in Alberta. They are facing staffing shortages, especially a shortage of nurses. Wait times for surgeries have increased and Albertans deserve to get the care that they need that is close to their home. The UCP government's budgets have failed to properly support a new hospital that is desperately needed in south Edmonton, and they have failed to address the health care crisis as hundreds of thousands of Albertans still do not have a family doctor and tens of thousands of people are waiting for the surgeries that they need. I have called

on the UCP government to end the chaos that is driving doctors and health care workers out of our province. The approach that the UCP government has been taking to bring more private health care into our system does not work and it is not a solution.

As your MLA, I am here to advocate for the people in Edmonton-Ellerslie. You can contact me at the constituency office at any time. I look forward to listening to you as we continue to work together to build a stronger community for all Albertans.

*Rod Loyola is the Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta for Edmonton-Ellerslie and Official opposition critic for Infrastructure.*

*Telephone: (780)-414-2000, e-mail: edmonton.ellerslie@assembly.ab.ca*



Councillor Keren Tang (left), MLA Rod Loyola (middle), and MLA Christina Gray at Cafe Mak during Mill Woods Dining Week.



MLA Rod Loyola advocating for the South Edmonton Hospital at a press conference on March 4, 2023.



MLA Rod Loyola (second from right) at Gurdwara Dukh Nivaran Sahib with members of the Sikh Sangat in February 2023.

Photos: Office of MLA Rod Loyola



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## "I am YEG Arts" Series: Titilope Sonuga

By Jamie Chapelsky

A poet, performer, playwright, and occasional actor – wherever there's a story to be told, that is where you will find Titilope Sonuga. Since 2021, Titilope has been serving as the Poet Laureate of the City of Edmonton, and her work, both written and spoken, has captured moments of tenderness and joy. As the time draws nearer to the end of her term as Poet Laureate, we caught up with Titilope to talk about her experiences, highlights, and where she sees herself going next. This "I Am YEG Arts" story focuses on Titilope Sonuga.

**Some people may not know, but you actually started out as an engineer. What inspired you to shift your path to pursue a living as an artist?**

I'm not sure that I was inspired as much as I was pushed, kind of in a spiritual way, to go on and pursue this life in the arts. I had worked as an engineer for many years and followed that path because it seemed clear and easy, but I knew there was this kind of nagging in my spirit about this other life that I loved and hoped and wished that there was a way to build something out of it that was sustainable. And I think I got to a point, like a tipping point, where I had been doing poetry and arts on the side as a hobby while going to my job, and slowly the dream started to eclipse my real life. More and more I was taking off on weekends to go teach workshops. I was like Superman/Clark Kent where I was hiding my identity. I had to make a decision about what kind of life I wanted to live, and the one I chose was the one that felt most authentic and true. Wildly risky, but it felt like a risk worth taking.

**As a storyteller, what narratives or inspiration do you find yourself returning to in your work?**

I find myself in my storytelling always returning to the stories of women, and even in moments where I'm like, *OK, I'm going to write a poem about [X]*, somehow I return, I guess metaphorically, to the place of my birth, which was from a woman. I think I'm deeply inspired by the many ways women can and do exist in the world, and the many lives that they choose, and the ways in which the world we live in hasn't necessarily been set up for us to flourish but somehow, we do. And the beauty of our flourishing is that we give other people, other things, other life forms permission to flourish as well. I think there's something really cyclical and regenerative about it. The lives of women – it's something that I find myself tipping back to in the stories that I want to tell and the stories that excite me.

**How has your tenure as Poet laureate impacted your career trajectory and relationship with Edmonton and Edmonton's creative community?**

I think my career has kind of evolved and continued to move in the ways that



Titilope Sonuga is a poet, performer, playwright, and occasional actor.

Photo: Abumere Photography

it likely already would have. But the role makes everything grander. It sets more eyes on your work. It introduces your work to more people who may not otherwise have known you. It invites you into spaces that you may not otherwise have been in. And so, I definitely have a bigger platform with which to do the things that I've always wanted to do and will continue to do.

My relationship with the city has continued to evolve in really beautiful ways. I arrived in the city as a teenager and so much of my formative years actually happened in Edmonton, and a lot of it as an artist. I think these new invitations into spaces have allowed me also to know the city brand new as well, and I'm trying to lean into what the people of the city love and desire and the many stories that exist here in Edmonton. I feel like the combination of my role as Poet Laureate, as well as a project that I just recently completed (*Black on the Prairies* where we're looking at Black life on the Prairies) those two experiences have really rooted me in this place as home. Edmonton is home, and has been for a long time, but it just feels more dug in now in a way that it hadn't before.

**As your term as Poet Laureate draws to a close, were there any unexpected highlights?**

There were many highlights along the way. I think one in particular that I hadn't expected was that I've been invited to speak at many, many schools. I've done school workshops before as part of my work, but in this time, I've gone into junior high schools, I've gone into high schools, I've spoken to principals and administrators, I've spoken to teachers. For me, my journey as a writer and performer began in a junior high school in Edmonton, and so there's a really important role that that early introduction to literature served for me. And to be able to offer that back by the school visits where I'm meeting young people who are the age I was when I first started writing and hoping, fingers crossed behind my back, that whatever that interaction is with them will be a seed that they can remember later on when they say, *oh, you know, I write plays, or I don't write but I journal and it's because a poet came into my school and said something one day*.

I didn't expect that school visits were going to become such a big part of my

work, but it's a part that I love quite deeply. I cherish the voices and opinions of young people and being in their spaces, posts 2020 and pandemic life has really, really enriched my life and work and I hope that it's been useful for them as well.

**Is there anything you haven't yet accomplished that you'd like to do during your term?**

Many, many things. I think the main thing that rings in my head is the *Tenderness Edmonton* project. I had thought, OK in the two years we're going to get so many tender stories and we're going to make this thing happen. I think I underestimated what point we were at in our collective healing. I think at the time it really did feel like we were around the bend; the pandemic was over, all that was going to be pouring out was these great stories of gratitude. But I think people needed more time, and as such I think the project needs more time. And stories did come in, but I think we are still at that point of figuring out and unpacking what the last few years have done to us. I had to offer myself and the people a ton of grace for the fact that yes, we have stories to tell and things to say, but maybe not yet. Maybe not immediately. Maybe we need more time for healing and recovery. Beyond my tenure, that's definitely a project that I want to continue to pursue.

**What advice would you give to emerging artists?**

1. Start with the truth in anything that you're creating. Let that compass be pointing toward the most radical, terrifying truth of your life, because ultimately, that's all there is.

2. Trust your voice, and that your voice in the way that you do your thing, however wacky and weird and strange, is actually where the sauce is; that's where the magic is. And there's always somebody on the other side of that who needs to hear you do your thing in the way that you do it. So much of what we do as artists is riddled by anxiety, insecurity, and fear. Like, *will it be good this time. Will it be horrible? Is everyone going to know that I don't know anything at all?* I'd say lean into that – that vulnerability and fear. Really magical things come out of that place.

**What would you say is your greatest strength as a creative?**

I think my greatest strength is my willingness to bear my heart, my willingness to be vulnerable. And it's taken me many, many years to get to the place where the stage isn't just a place of performance for me, but a place of real feeling and openness and vulnerability in which I know what I'm there to do, but I'm also open to the possibilities. That keeps me soft and that keeps the work as tender and honest as it can be. I think my greatest strength is that I'm not afraid to feel with people, and that invites them to come to the work with their vulnerabilities. I think many magical things have happened in that space. So yeah,

Continued on page 8



## "My greatest strength is that I'm not afraid to feel with people"

Continued from page 7

my greatest strength is actually what makes me most soft.

**Tell us a little bit about what you're currently working on and what you hope to explore next.**

I've gotten two really great pieces of news in the last couple of weeks. The first was a large project grant from the Edmonton Arts Council to work on my next album, *Sis*, which is an exploration of Sisterhood and friendship and relocating "friendship" as a really beautiful place of transformation and strength as the ultimate love story. We view romantic love as the pinnacle of all loves, but I think about friendships that predate my marriage, I think about friendships that I knew even before I was an artist. That's the love that sustains. That's the love that has transformed my life. And so, this album is a love story to all the women who have braced me throughout my life.

And then I received another project grant from the Canada Council for the Arts to work on another iteration of *Open*, which is my live poetry show that incorporates music. This version will allow me to transcribe this work to classical sheet music and work with an orchestra to re-explore poems with music and what that does in a performance setting. I'm hoping, if I follow my timelines, it will be my farewell show for my role where people can come out and experience this work with a 30-piece orchestra that I'm working with out of Calgary, as well as Melafrique. It'll be a really fantastic exploration of poetry and music and all the ways that words and music are like a perfect marriage.

What I'm currently working on and what I'm hoping to explore next are intertwined, but just more of being out in the world again. I've had in the last few weeks more live performances than I have had in the last three years. I really love the stage and being in call



Titilope Sonuga has been serving as the City's Poet Laureate since 2021.

Photo: Jerrie Rotimi

and response with other people, and so more of that as we go forward is what I'm hopeful for.

### About Titilope Sonuga

Titilope Sonuga is a poet, playwright and performer whose work grasps moments of tenderness and persistent joy at the intersection of blackness and womanhood. She is a leading voice in local and international poetry communities who has travelled extensively as an artist and facilitated adult and youth poetry workshops worldwide. She has served on various artistic and community boards in Edmonton and is the founder of the Breath In Poetry Collective, a mentorship and performance platform for emerging poets. Sonuga is the author of three collections of poetry, *Down to Earth* (Self Published, 2011), *Abscess* (Geko Publishing, 2014), and *This Is How We Disappear* (Write Bloody North, 2019) and has composed and released two spoken word albums; *Mother Tongue* (2011) and *Swim* (2019). She has written three plays, *The Six*; an intergenerational exploration of womanhood, *Naked*; a one-woman play and *Ada The Country*, a musical. Sonuga has scripted global advertising campaigns for numerous organizations, including The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Google, Intel Corporation, The World Health Organization, White Ribbon Alliance and The MacArthur Foundation. Her writing has been translated into Italian, German and Slovak.

Titilope Sonuga will conclude her two-year term as Edmonton's Poet Laureate on June 30, 2023. Keep informed about Titilope's work and events by following her on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, and visiting her website (<https://titilope.ca>).

This interview was first published on the blog of the Edmonton Arts Council: <https://yegarts.tumblr.com/>

## Edmonton Arts Council seeks Edmonton's tenth Poet Laureate

The Edmonton Arts Council, City of Edmonton, and Edmonton Public Library have issued a call for Edmonton's tenth Poet Laureate. As an ambassador for the literary arts, the Poet Laureate incorporates poetry that reflects Edmonton, its people, and its diversity into official and informal city activities.

"I know firsthand that the arts can change, shape, and save lives. Artistic performances like the work of the Poet Laureate can break down barriers by telling the often-untold stories of underrepresented community members and can create meaningful connections between people of all walks of life," said Mayor Amarjeet Sohi. "I would like to thank Titilope for her work these past two years and I encourage local poets to lend their voices to this important program. I look forward to hearing the stories they have to tell, and to celebrating their art."

Edmonton's current Poet Laureate is Titilope Sonuga, a poet, playwright and performer whose work grasps moments of tenderness and persistent

joy at the intersection of blackness and womanhood. She is a leading voice in local and international poetry communities who has travelled extensively as an artist and facilitated adult and youth poetry workshops worldwide. During her time as Poet Laureate, Titilope has served as a literary ambassador with performances locally, nationally, and internationally. Her project, *TendernessYEG*, captured our collective stories of hope and healing, and will continue following her term.

"Titilope's welcoming and inclusive spirit created countless moments of reflection and joy for Edmontonians. Her poetry, both written and spoken, has been captivating, inspirational, and full of hope for new beginnings in the Edmonton of tomorrow," said Edmonton Arts Council Executive Director Sanjay Shahani. "We look forward to seeing how our next Poet Laureate will inspire our city through the beauty and lyricism of poetry."

EPL is honoured to champion contributors to the literary arts who enrich our communities and foster engagement and learning about our city.

"Access to collections and poets representing a wide range of thoughts, experiences and backgrounds is fundamental to a public library's role," said Edmonton Public Library's CEO, Pilar Martinez. "Titilope Sonuga's work

reflects the diversity and intricacies of our city, and we are honoured to have had such a powerful and passionate voice leading our city as the Poet Laureate. Edmonton has an incredible spoken word community, and we look forward to supporting the next literary arts ambassador in this role."

The next Poet Laureate will serve a two-year term beginning on July 3, 2023. This is a part-time, flexible role with an annual honorarium of \$10,000.

Edmonton writers and poets are invited to apply for the role. **The deadline for applications is 12:00 p.m. MST on Wednesday, May 3, 2023.** Full details for the call and a link to apply can be found at [edmontonarts.ca](http://edmontonarts.ca).

### Letters to the editor are welcome

We invite you to write letters to the editor. A maximum of 275 words is preferred. Letters must carry a first name or two initials with surname, and include an address and daytime telephone number. All letters are subject to editing. We don't publish letters addressed to others or sent to other publications.

E-mail your letter to the Editor of the *Mill Woods Mosaic*: [mwmosaic@telus.net](mailto:mwmosaic@telus.net)

*The Edmonton Arts Council is a not-for-profit organization that supports and promotes the arts community in Edmonton. The EAC works to increase the profile and involvement of arts and culture in all aspects of our community life.*





## Celebrating Punjabi Culture

Thousands of people gathered at Mill Woods Town Centre on April 7 and 8 to celebrate "Baisakh Mela 2023." The multicultural event included live performances, a Mrs. Punjaban competition, shopping, food, and face painting for children. The event was organized by Sigadi Events and sponsored by local businesses.

Enthusiastically celebrated around the world, Basant Panchami popularly known as Vasant Panchami (Vaisakhi) is a festival that marks the arrival of the spring season and is a celebration of spring harvest primarily in Northern India and is also celebrated as Rongali Bihu, Naba Barsha along with many other names across South Asian communities. Sigadi Events organized The Baisakh Mela 2023 to celebrate all these festivals. Thousands of guests from different cultures, generations and communities came together under one roof throughout both days to celebrate a weekend of music, dance, face painting, arts and live shopping from 30+ vendors.

The USP for this year's event was

- The Fashion show where local boutiques had the young talents walk the ramp, displayed fashion with style and was a big hit.
- The Mrs. Punjaban Beauty Pageant – This event was exclusively for married women who got busy with building and supporting their families after migrating to Canada and forgot about their dreams and passion.

Monika Nijhawan

Photos: Kohli Klicks ([www.kohliklicks.com](http://www.kohliklicks.com))

## Letters to the editor are welcome

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The winners of the Mrs. Punjaban competition (from left to right): Arshdeep Kaur (first runner-up), Sheetal Sandhu (Mrs. Punjaban), and Samanpreet Kaur (second runner-up).

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## Creating a psychologically healthy and safe workplace

**Covenant Health teams work together to build a workplace where everyone can be their whole self.**

Patricia-Lynn (Trisha) Tallon believes that everyone deserves to work in a place where they are psychologically safe to be their whole self. And as Covenant Health's new manager of psychological health and wellness, she spends time helping people understand what that means.

"A psychologically safe environment is one where all basic needs are met and where every reasonable effort is made to protect mental health," she says. "[It] allows you to be yourself, where you speak up without fears of negative consequences and where the organization promotes mental health."

Covenant Health has been promoting psychological safety and mental health for its workforce for many years. It is now recommitting to creating a healthy and safe workplace for everyone — staff, physicians and volunteers. This work connects to many initiatives already underway within the organization, for example, existing occupational, health, safety and wellness; quality; and diversity and inclusion programs.

"I look at this as being a shared responsibility; it's something every staff member is responsible for in their own way," says Trisha. "It's how we treat our co-workers, and it's how we work together as teams. It needs to be everywhere in the organization."

Part of Covenant Health's work ahead is countering myths about psychologically safe workplaces, Trisha says. One common idea is that in psychologically safe workplaces everyone is "nice" and agrees with everything. In reality, these are workplaces where people are comfortable disagreeing while knowing they'll be respected for having a different viewpoint. They are places where people and teams work through disagreements.

Another misconception is that work



**Covenant Health teams work together to build a workplace where everyone can be their whole self.**

Photo: Covenant Health

standards are lower in a psychologically safe workplace. Yet research shows that organizations with high levels of psychological safety are more innovative, says Trisha.

"When employees work in a system that is psychologically safe and healthy, they are more likely to be healthy themselves," she says. "People want to come to work, they feel fulfilled and they're more engaged in their work. They have higher self-esteem because they feel like they're contributing. At Covenant Health, this means you feel connected to the mission and that you are part of something greater."

Employers also benefit from creating psychologically safe and healthy workplaces, says Trisha. Some of the benefits for healthcare organizations are:

- Improved recruitment and retention
- Increased staff engagement and

morale

- Improved creativity and innovation
- Increased patient safety and quality of care
- Decreased workplace conflict
- Increased engagement with patients, residents and families

Rewards and recognition enhance positive mental health in the workplace as well, says Trisha. "Some teams [at Covenant Health] have created walls of appreciation in their areas where they write messages of support and kind messages to each other."

Trisha says some Covenant Health teams are developing purpose statements to enhance psychological safety. "Leaders have recognized that they're a new team or there's been a lot of change on their team and that they need to clarify their purpose together," she says. "This helps people understand what's expected of them and what their role in the team is."

To help build a psychologically safe workplace, Covenant Health also has:

- A workplace abuse and harassment policy
- A workplace incident reporting line — to report abuse, harassment, injury, near misses or psychological distress
- A commitment to diversity and inclusion
- A just culture policy and guide — to outline a work environment where individuals believe they will receive fair and just treatment when involved in an adverse event
- An employee and family assistance program
- An ethics centre and clinical ethicists
- Chaplains to support spiritual health
- Wellness resources and more than 200 wellness partners across the organization
- Crisis management support through Homewood Health

"Every action or inaction we take in the workplace has a consequence for others," says Trisha. "We can act in a way that lifts others or in a way that does not. Is what you're doing making others feel included or excluded? If we have any concern about how a colleague is doing, we should feel comfortable to have a conversation with them."

To move the work forward, Trisha has created an advisory committee with representatives from different roles across the organization. This group will help develop and guide new efforts to enhance the workplace.

"There is no quick fix or magic wand to create a psychologically safe and healthy workplace," she says. "It takes intention and time, but the results can be very positive."

*Lisa Brunelle works as a communications advisor at Covenant Health.*

This article was first published in *The Vital Beat*, a weekly newsletter published by Covenant Health.

**The next issue of the Mill Woods Mosaic will be published on May 15, 2023. The deadline is Friday, May 12.**

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**\*membership must be purchased by April 20**



## Gene Zwozdesky Centre one step closer to opening

Edmontonians are one step closer to increased access to vital health care at the Gene Zwozdesky Centre at Norwood. The centre is named after Gene Zwozdesky who was the MLA for Edmonton-Mill Creek, provincial cabinet minister, and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

Alberta's government is committed to expanding capacity in the continuing care system so more people can access the care they need where and when they need it. Construction of a new tower is now complete and will be handed over to Alberta Health Services and CapitalCare to prepare the building for patients and residents. Further renovations will increase capacity at the Gene Zwozdesky Centre at Norwood to create more space for residents waiting in hospital for a long-term home.

"I am thrilled that this project is so close to the finish line," said Nathan Neudorf, Minister of Infrastructure. "It represents a significant investment in Alberta's future. Not only does it add much-needed health-care and programming spaces, but construction projects like this create jobs and help to strengthen our economy."

"This project is an essential part of building a resilient and responsive continuing care system that meets the needs of Albertans," said Jason Copping, Minister of Health. "When this facility opens in the next few months, it will provide residents with not just a home but a community where on-location services and programs are available to meet their needs."

This new seven-storey tower will feature 234 complex continuing care and post acute beds, as well as new ambulatory clinics and an expanded Comprehensive Home Option of Integrated Care for the Elderly (CHOICE) Program.

After a commissioning period, the facility is expected to open to the public this fall. These additional spaces will open more spaces in Alberta's acute care system and further expand capacity in the province's health system.

Patients, doctors, health-care staff and the local community all provided input for the planning and design of the new tower. The 'Y' shape of the building provides every resident with a great view and improves staff workflow.

Budget 2023 invests almost \$91 million over three years to complete the additional work required at the Gene Zwozdesky Centre at Norwood, including:

- renovating the Angus McGugan Pavilion to accommodate 116 hospice and complex continuing care beds
- demolishing the North Pavilion and CHOICE day centre
- constructing a stand-alone parking structure for community emergency medical service (EMS) vehicles and renal dialysis vans.

"This beautiful, purpose-built space will support people to live their lives fully, offering a continuum of care and services, including community care, rehabilitation, continuing care, research and learning," said Carol Anderson, chief zone officer,



The new Gene Zwozdesky Care, located in North Central Edmonton, will be open to the public in the fall.

Photo: Government of Alberta

Edmonton Zone, Alberta Health Services.

"We're excited this transformational space will be a real home for our residents," said Aileen Wong, chief operating officer, CapitalCare. "It's a modern, innovative space that will serve the needs of the diverse population needing continuing care."

Once the entire project is complete, the more than 38,000-square-metre facility will have 350 beds, a fully accessible green roof, a community paramedic program, specialty dental clinic and respiratory outreach program, and will provide a wide range of other community services for Albertans with complex care needs.

This project supports the government's priority to strengthen Alberta's health-care system and expand continuing care capacity in the province. The leading-edge Gene Zwozdesky Centre will provide rehabilitative programs to help all those in continuing care maintain their best quality of life. The facility will help relieve health system pressures by reducing the demand for emergency department visits, inpatient acute care services in hospitals and continuing care placements.

Budget 2023 secures Alberta's future by transforming the health-care system to meet people's needs, supporting Albertans with the high cost of living, keeping our communities safe and driving the economy with more jobs, quality education and continued diversification.

### Quick facts

- CapitalCare, which has proven expertise in providing continuing and palliative care, will operate the Gene Zwozdesky Centre at Norwood.
- Once complete, the centre will create 145 new continuing care spaces and renovate an additional 205.
- The demolition of the North

Pavilion and CHOICE day centre, as well as the renovation of the Angus McGugan Pavilion, will begin once the staff and residents move into the new tower and is expected to be complete in summer 2025.

- The construction of a stand-alone parking structure for nine parking stalls for community EMS vehicles

and renal dialysis vans is expected to be complete by summer 2025.

- This project has generated more than 2,200 construction and construction-related jobs and two million hours of on-site work.

At the peak of construction, there were approximately 500 workers on site.

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## The Famous Five – Five Women Who Changed Canada

Five Edmonton parks bear the names of a group of women known as the Famous Five. They achieved a breakthrough for Canadian women back in 1929. Who were they, and what did they do?

The women of the Famous Five were all immigrants to Alberta. Three were Ontario-born, one was Quebec-born, and one was English-born. One had lived in India before settling in Alberta; another had lived in the U.S.

Each of the five had long been prominent in the women's movement and other public initiatives. Three of them had even served as Alberta MLAs.

Although pushing for social change is usually conducted by young people, none of the Five could have been called young in 1929. Four of them were in their 60s.

Henrietta Muir Edwards was in her 80s in 1929. She is also the only woman among the Five who kept her maiden name, even as an additional middle name. Emily Murphy, the initiator of the Famous Five, was actually sometimes called "Mrs. Arthur Murphy."

Emily Murphy was born in Ontario in 1868 as Emily Ferguson. She married Arthur Murphy in 1887. They moved to Manitoba in 1903 and to Edmonton in 1907. In 1908, with her children grown up, she devoted herself to public endeavours. Her fight for the rights of married women led to her being named a magistrate in 1916, becoming the first female judge in the British Empire.

Shortly after that, Alberta women won the right to vote and to serve in the Legislature, and women won the right to vote in federal elections and to serve in the House of Commons.

However, the Senate, the "upper house" of the Canadian Parliament, was still a male preserve. Senators are appointed, not elected, but no governments were appointing women. They said by the Constitution they could only appoint "persons" and women were not included under that term.

The Senate was the last area in which women were not on an equal footing with men in the federal sphere. (But not all women had the vote back then. Like their male counterparts, women with Indian Treaty status and female Asians were denied the vote. These restrictions were finally abolished in the 1960s.)

Not surprisingly, Emily Murphy, a person of decided person-hood, did not agree with the government's definition of the term "person." So in 1929 she got four other women to join her in submitting a constitutional question on the term "persons."

The other four women were activists of long-standing and considerable achievement.

Nellie McClung was born in Ontario in 1873 as Nellie Mooney. In 1880 as a child she moved west to Manitoba. She married Robert McClung in 1896 and started a family of her own and worked to support the family with her writing. Her book *Sowing Seeds in Danny* was a bestseller in 1908 and made her a small fortune. The family moved to Edmonton in 1915. She served as an MLA 1921 to 1926. Her family moved to Calgary.

Louise McKinney was born in Ontario in 1868 as Louise Crummy. She became a teacher. She moved to North Dakota, where she married James McKinney in 1896. Louise was promi-

nent in the Women's Christian Temperance Union. In 1903 they moved to Alberta to farm near Claresholm. Louise's leadership in the Alberta WCTU helped lead to the passage of a liquor-prohibition law in 1915. Believing the Liberals and

again came west and Oliver attended to the medical needs of the Piikani (Peigan) Nation.

Henrietta was the legal expert among the Famous Five. Her ground-breaking book *Legal Status of Women in Canada* helped set the stage for their fight in 1929.

Louise McKinney and Irene Parlby were also political communicators. They contributed articles and speeches in the heyday of the "old left" in the 1910s and 1920s. This was when Alberta farmers, workers and socialists were pursuing redress of their specific needs, which they thought were not being properly addressed by Liberals and Conservatives.

Many women felt they also needed direct representation, to push for respect for women's work in the workplace as well as for their work as wives, mothers, sisters and daughters. This included representation in the Senate.

In 1929 Murphy gathered the Five together at her home, which still stands at 11011 - 88th Avenue. They signed a request for the Privy Council in London, England to rule on the meaning of the term "persons" used in the Constitution.

The ruling when it came was simple - in some places in the Constitution "persons" meant men and in other places it covered members of both genders. So the judges said the word could mean whatever the government wanted. Thus, the last obstacle to political equality between men and women was abolished. Within a few months of the ruling, the first woman Senator was appointed.

Five parks in Edmonton bear the names of the Famous Five. Emily Murphy Park is located along the river near Hawrelak Park.

The other four parks are grouped near

the Low Level Bridge, two on the north side of the river and two on the south side; two east of the bridge and two west of the bridge.

Louise McKinney Riverfront Park is near the Edmonton Convention Centre east of the bridge. Henrietta Louise Edwards Park is on the south side of the river east of the bridge. Nellie McClung Park is west of the bridge along Scona Road. Irene Parlby Park is in Rosedale across the river from McClung's park.

The City of Calgary has a group of statues of the Famous Five, but the parks are their only memorials in Edmonton. Just the parks - and the forty-four women who are now serving in the Senate. These women also stand as memorials to the Famous Five's valiant endeavour in 1929.

### Additional reading:

Nancy Millar, *The Famous Five* (2003)

Grant MacEwan, *And Mighty Women Too, Stories of Notable Western Canadian Women* (1979)

Byrne Hope Sanders, *Emily Murphy - Crusader* (1945)

Barbara Villy Cormack, *Perennials and Politics. The Life Story of Hon. Irene Parlby* (1970)

Charlotte Gray, *Extraordinary Canadians - Nellie McClung* (2008)

Louise McKinney, "The Farmers Opportunity. Mrs. McKinney's Great Speech, Edmonton Jan. 22, 1919", in the pages of *The Alberta Non-Partisan*, Jan. 30, 1919 (available online - Peel's Prairie Provinces)

Irene Parlby, *Progress or reaction?* (1921) (available online - Peel's Prairie Provinces)

Tom Monto is an Edmonton historian and author of *Old Strathcona - Edmonton's Southside Roots and Protest and Progress - Three Labour Radicals in Early Edmonton. He is also author of the blog site <https://montopedia.wixsite.com/montopedia>*

Tom  
Monto

A  
Different  
Perspective



Conservatives did not represent her interests, she ran as a candidate for the Non-Partisan League in 1917. She won the Claresholm seat, becoming the first woman to serve in a legislature in all of the British Empire.

Irene Parlby was born in England in 1868 as Irene Marryat. She travelled to India, then came to Alberta in 1896. In 1897 she married a former British soldier/Oxford graduate farming at Alix. She found a place for herself on his farm and became active in the United Farm Women of Alberta. She was elected an MLA in 1921. She was still an MLA and a cabinet minister in Alberta's Farmer government when she met with the other four at Murphy's house that day in 1929.

Henrietta Muir Edwards was a generation older than the rest. She was born in Montreal in 1849, as Henrietta Muir. She married Dr. Oliver Cromwell Edwards in 1876. They came west in 1883, then in 1890 moved to Ottawa. There she worked with Lady Ishbel, wife of the governor-general of Canada, to found the National Council of Women. In 1901, she and Oliver

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### "Hope in the Midst of Crisis"

The 43rd annual Outdoor Way of the Cross was held in the streets of Edmonton's inner city on Good Friday, April 7. About 200 people joined the annual ecumenical prayer walk marking the suffering and death of Jesus. This year's walk was based on the theme "Hope in the Midst of Crisis." Local leaders contributed reflections on food security, homes for all, war and violence, Indigenous justice and more.

Photo: Paula E. Kirman

Mill Woods Mosaic - [mwmosaic@telus.net](mailto:mwmosaic@telus.net)

## City issues are provincial issues

### Edmonton City Councillor Jo-Anne Wright

We all know that Edmonton is essential to Alberta's future and the upcoming provincial election will have a big impact on our city – no matter who forms government. When the provincial candidates come knocking on your door in the coming weeks, talk to them about what's important to you. Asking about Edmonton is a great way to start a conversation about the kind of city in which we all want to live.

If **community safety** is a priority for you, you may want to consider asking, "What's your plan to target the root causes of social disorder and improve community safety in my neighbourhood?" Rather than merely targeting the symptoms in the short term so that some people feel safer, a longer term solution would be to address the underlying reasons, such as the lack of housing and mental health supports, that can lead to the unsafe situations.

If **housing** is important to you, then ask, "How will you make housing more affordable for all income levels?" or "What's your plan to invest in supportive housing for our city's most vulnerable?" Every Edmontonian deserves a safe and

affordable place to call home. You can make housing part of the conversation.

If your focus is on the **climate crisis**, you should be asking, "What's your plan to support Edmonton's energy transition and help build a climate resilient city?" To combat cli-



Coun. Jo-Anne Wright

mate change, Edmonton needs to get greener as we grow. Public transportation will help get us there. Let's work with the provincial government to bring greener transportation to Edmonton.

If you're concerned about the **economic environment**, you can ask, "What's your plan to diversify Edmonton's economy?" or "How will you ensure that provincial transfers keep pace with Edmonton's

growth?"

Once the writ drops and the election is officially called, check out the city's website: [edmonton.ca/AskAboutEdmonton](http://edmonton.ca/AskAboutEdmonton) for more ideas on how you can make Edmonton's priorities part of the conversation in the upcoming provincial election.

If you have any comments or concerns, I encourage you as always to reach out to my office at 780-496-8148 or [jo-anne.wright@edmonton.ca](mailto:jo-anne.wright@edmonton.ca)

# Happy Vaisakhi

To you and your family, may this Vaisakhi be filled with love, happiness, peace and joy!



@ChristinaNDP

## Christina Gray, MLA

Edmonton - Mill Woods

3448 93 Street | 780-414-1000

[edmonton.millwoods@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:edmonton.millwoods@assembly.ab.ca)



# Important addresses for immigrants and other newcomers

If you are new to Edmonton and don't know anybody, it can be tough to find a place to stay, a job, the right school for your children or good health care services, but there is plenty of help available.

Here are some of the main agencies specializing in helping immigrants and other newcomers in the Edmonton area:

**Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers**  
11713 - 82 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5B 2V9  
Tel. (780) 424-7709  
Website: [www.emcn.ab.ca](http://www.emcn.ab.ca)

*The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers offers a wide variety of programs for newcomers and helps immigrants to find a place to live, a job and English classes.*

**Welcome Centre for Immigrants** in Mill Woods  
Suite 200, Tower II, Millbourne Mall  
7609 - 38 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6K 3L6  
Tel. (780) 462-6924  
Website: [www.mwci-edmonton.net](http://www.mwci-edmonton.net)

*The Welcome Centre for Immigrants in Mill Woods offers many programs and services for immigrants, including settlement assistance, language and educational counseling, employment assistance, citizenship classes, English classes, computer classes, public speaking classes, and youth programs.*

**Changing Together Centre for Immigrant Women**  
3rd Floor, 9538 - 107 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5H 0T7  
Tel. (780) 421-0175  
Website: [www.changingtogether.com](http://www.changingtogether.com)

*Founded in 1984, Changing Together is a non-profit, charitable organization operated by immigrant women for immigrant women. Its mission is to help Edmonton and area immigrant women and their families overcome personal and systemic barriers that keep them from participating fully in Canadian Society.*

**Catholic Social Services**  
8212 - 118 Avenue NW  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5B 0S3  
Tel. (780) 424-3545  
Website: [www.catholicsocialservices.ab.ca](http://www.catholicsocialservices.ab.ca)

*For more than 50 years, Catholic Social Services has welcomed immigrants and refugees to Alberta. The services are free and offered in both official languages and more than 50 other languages. In the Meadows, CSS runs a drop-in group for women of all ages and backgrounds. Participants connect through diverse activities like speaking English, sharing cultural experiences, learning to use computers and connecting with useful resources. The program, called Tea Connections, runs every Friday from 10 a.m. to noon, in the room of The Meadows Community League on the 2nd floor of the Meadows Community Recreation Centre, 2704 - 17 Street. For more information, contact Raminder Dhindsa at [raminder.dhindsa@cssalberta.ca](mailto:raminder.dhindsa@cssalberta.ca) or 780-391-3204.*

**Family Futures Resource Network**  
5704 - 19 A Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6L 1L8  
Tel. 413-4521  
Website: [www.familyfutures.ca](http://www.familyfutures.ca)

*The Family Futures Resource Network (FFRN) is a non-profit organization providing support to families and parents in the areas of early childhood education, child and youth, family and adult support and parent education. The FFRN has three separate*

*locations in Mill Woods: Millhurst Site (5704 - 19 A Avenue), Knottwood Site (1733 Mill Woods Road) and Millbourne Community Site (3756 - 78 Street).*

**Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative**  
9538 - 107 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5H 0T7  
Tel. (780) 423-1973  
Website: [www.mchb.org](http://www.mchb.org)

*The Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative is a registered worker's co-operative with members from immigrant and refugee communities, providing culturally and linguistically relevant prenatal education, post-natal outreach, parenting support, family liaison and community development support to immigrant and refugee families.*

**Indo-Canadian Women's Association**  
9324 - 34 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6E 5X8  
Tel. (780) 490-0477

*The Indo-Canadian Women's Association is a not-for-profit organization for enthusiastic volunteers committed to full participation of immigrant and visible minority women and men in economic, social and political life in Canada.*

**The Shaama Centre for Seniors and Women**  
(formerly Multicultural Women & Seniors Services Association)  
329 Woodvale Road West  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6L 3Z7  
Tel. (780) 465-2992

*The Shaama Centre for Seniors and Women (SCSW) is a non-profit, organization. The focus is to provide service and programs for immigrant women and senior men and women. Program goal is to promote and enhance the well-being and self-reliance of seniors and women especially those at risk and isolated before a crisis situation occurs. SCSW provides social support, information sessions, and skill building classes, home and hospital visits, as well as translation, and referrals to other service providers. It also offers family support and crisis intervention. For youth, there are Urdu and math classes and homework help, and there is also an Urdu library with more than 2000 books. The SCSW is open from 9 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday.*

**Youth Empowerment and Support Services**  
9310 - Whyte Avenue (82 Ave.)  
Edmonton, Alberta, T6C 0Z6  
Tel. (780) 468-7070  
Website: [www.yess.org](http://www.yess.org)

*The Youth Emergency Shelter Society is a not-for-profit organization serving young people between the ages of 15-18 who are in crisis, at risk or homeless.*

**Alberta Employment Standards**  
Edmonton Office - Main Floor Sterling Place  
9940 - 106 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 2N2  
Tel. (780) 427-3731  
Website: [www.employment.alberta.ca](http://www.employment.alberta.ca)

*Alberta Employment Standards is a provincial agency responsible for the administration and enforcement of employment standards in Alberta. AES has publications available for temporary for-*

*eign workers and their employers to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under Alberta's employment standards and workplace health and safety legislation. These publications are available in Chinese, English, French, German and Spanish.*

**NorQuest College**  
10215 - 108 Street NW  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5J 1L6  
Tel. (780) 422-2020  
Website: [www.norquest.ab.ca](http://www.norquest.ab.ca)

*NorQuest College is a public college offering many programs, including English as a Second Language classes and employment programs for immigrants.*

**Alberta Health and Wellness**  
Edmonton Office  
Telus Tower North, Main Floor  
10025 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
Tel. (780) 427-1432  
Website: [www.health.alberta.ca](http://www.health.alberta.ca)

*Alberta Health and Wellness answers any questions about health care and health care insurance coverage in Alberta.*

**Immigrant Access Fund Canada**  
45, 9912 - 106 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5J 4M9  
Tel. (Toll Free) 1-855-423-2262  
Website: [www.iafcanada.org](http://www.iafcanada.org)

*The Immigrant Access Fund provides micro loans to internationally trained immigrant professionals, trades people and skilled workers so they may obtain the Canadian licensing and/or training that will allow them to obtain employment in their field.*

## Other important phone numbers:

### Edmonton Police Service

**Emergency calls only ..... 9-1-1**  
**Police - Fire - Ambulance**  
Life & death, injury accident, crime in progress

**Non-emergency calls**  
**(Dispatch) ..... 780-423-4567**  
Report of suspicious activity, calls for assistance, advice, etc.

**Poison Centre ..... 1-800-332-1414**

**Hazardous Material Spills ..... 9-1-1**

### Utility Trouble Calls Only:

**Power Emergency ..... 780-412-4500**  
Within Edmonton

**Gas Emergency ..... 780-420-5585**  
Edmonton & Area

**Drainage Trouble ..... 780-496-1717**

**Sewer Trouble ..... 780-496-1717**

**Wastewater (odour hotline) ..... 780-469-8176**

**Water Emergency Service ..... 780-412-6800**

**The next issue of the Mill Woods Mosaic will be published on May 15, 2023. The deadline for advertising and editorial is Friday, May 12, 2023.**



## Division Plan for Continuous Growth

### Edmonton Catholic Schools Trustee Laura Thibert

The Edmonton Catholic School Division has grown by over 12,000 students in the last ten years; however, new schools have only accommodated half of this growth. In the last year, ECSD's student enrolment grew by an unprecedented rate of 7.8%. Due to record-levels of migration from within and outside of Canada, growth is expected to continue at an accelerated rate over the next few years. Enrolment growth is not felt evenly across the city, as schools on the outskirts of Anthony Henday Drive have experienced a much higher increase of 17% growth in the last year. The Three-Year Capital Plan 2024-2027 aims to strategically address enrolment growth, while at the same time reducing unfunded spaces within older communities. ECSD has several schools in newer communities that will be 150% over-utilized in a few years. The 2024-2027 plan aims to address this by requesting new schools that will reduce enrolment pressures at full schools, while also accommodating for future student growth. This plan identifies a significant need for two schools within the first-year priorities in Ward 77 which includes a new K-9 school in the Laurel community with a capacity of 950 students and a new high school in the Meadows/Silverberry community next to the Meadows Community Recreation Centre with a capacity of 1,725 students.

Alberta Education requires all school jurisdictions to submit a Three-Year Education Plan annually. At the March 2023 Public Meeting the Board of Trustees approved The Three-Year Education Plan which we refer to as our *Division Plan for Continuous Growth*.



Trustee Laura Thibert

This plan is grounded in four new priorities: Living our Faith, Learning Excellence, Organization Excellence, and Embracing Diversity. Development of the Division Plan for Continuous Growth 2023-2026 involved effective engagement with educational partners. The process began with a facilitated strategic planning session with the Board to examine the work of the Division at a departmental level. Principals and Division leaders also provided feedback on this work. The input of the School Councils from each of our schools provided during our Community of School Councils Engagement in October of 2022 also provides valuable insights into this plan that resonated with families. We will aim to develop strategies and priorities that will inspire our students and ensure their success by giving them the tools they need to succeed. The priorities and goals will remain fixed for the three-year planning cycle. We have the ability to evaluate our goals on a yearly basis and modify or develop additional strategies to target areas of growth required in order to actualize our Division's priorities.

I want to close by saying that I am committed to making decisions that are in the best interests of our students and I am interested in engaging with members of our school communities. If you have ideas you feel will contribute to our collective success or questions about any ECSD educational topics, I welcome conversations on educational matters and look forward to chatting with you. I can be reached at 780-231-6312, or by e-mail at [Laura.Thibert@ecsd.net](mailto:Laura.Thibert@ecsd.net).

## Letters to the editor welcome

We invite you to write letters to the editor. A maximum of 275 words is preferred. Letters must carry a first name or two initials with surname, and include an address and daytime telephone number. All letters are subject to editing. We don't publish letters addressed to others or sent to other publications. Please e-mail your letter to: The Editor of the Mill Woods Mosaic, [mwmosaic@telus.net](mailto:mwmosaic@telus.net).

# What's up?

## Community events in Mill Woods

- April 15** - Spring Market & Craft Sale  
German-Canadian Cultural Centre  
8310 Roper Road NW, Edmonton  
12:00 p.m. (noon) - 5:00 p.m.  
[www.gcca.ca](http://www.gcca.ca) • Phone 780-466-4000
- April 16, 23 & 30** - Sing, Sign, Laugh and Learn  
for babies and toddlers  
Edmonton Public Library, Mill Woods Branch  
2620 Hewes Way NW, Mill Woods  
1:30 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.  
Contact info: Tel. (780) 496-1818
- April 22** - Spring Gift & Craft Sale  
Leefield Community Hall  
7910 - 36 Avenue NW, Mill Woods  
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
[www.leefield.ca](http://www.leefield.ca) • Phone 780-463-2456
- April 28** - Adult Playground Fundraiser – Wine Tasting  
North Millbourne Community League  
980 Millbourne Road East NW, Mill Woods  
6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
Register: [social@nmclinfo.com](mailto:social@nmclinfo.com)
- May 20** - Rock Climbing at Vertically Inclined  
8523 Argyll Road NW, Edmonton for members  
of North Millbourne Community League  
2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Register by May 12: [social@nmclinfo.com](mailto:social@nmclinfo.com)
- May 21** - Vaisakhi Nagar Kirtan (Sikh Parade)  
Starts from Gurdwara Siri Guru Singh Sabha  
(4504 Mill Woods Road South) to Gurdwara  
Millwoods (2606 Mill Woods Road East)  
One Way Only  
Noon - 5:00 p.m.
- May 30** - Annual General Meeting  
The Meadows Community League  
Volunteer Info Session at 5:00 p.m.  
Guest Speakers at 6:00 p.m.  
General Meeting at 7:00 p.m.  
Residents of Larkspur, Silver Berry and  
Wildrose can register here:  
<https://TMCLAGMMAY2023.eventbrite.ca>

*Do you have a community event in Mill Woods to announce? Please send us the information, and we will include it in this community calendar in the next issue of the Mill Woods Mosaic.*

Tel. (780) 465-7526 or e-mail to:  
[mwmosaic@telus.net](mailto:mwmosaic@telus.net)

The next deadline is Friday, May 12, 2023.

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**Do you have  
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for the Mill  
Woods Mosaic?  
Give us a call at  
780-465-7526  
or e-mail to  
[mwmosaic@telus.net](mailto:mwmosaic@telus.net)**

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