



*Photo courtesy of Take a Hike Foundation*

# FIRST WEST FOUNDATION

## 2023 IMPACT REPORT

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First West Foundation is a federally registered charity and is classified as a private foundation affiliated with First West Credit Union. It was created by the Board and Executive in 1996 to be a perpetual source of funding in support of communities served by First West Credit Union.

[firstwestfoundation.ca](https://firstwestfoundation.ca)







BC & ALBERTA GUIDE DOGS

# IMPACT SNAPSHOT

**\$1,092,023**

Disbursed in grants

**104**

Charities supported

**\$559,124**

Donations received

## Hello Ruby!

Positively adorable, Ruby, named by First West team members, is one of many guide dogs supported by First West Foundation over the years. BC & Alberta Guide Dogs have received four grants totaling \$60,025 since 2020, including a 2023, \$20,000 impact grant from the Envision Financial Community Endowment.

“Your **donation** will create the best possible opportunity to **raise a life-changing dog** for someone who is blind/visually impaired, a child with autism, or perhaps a Veteran or First Responder with an Operational Stress Injury.”

# RUBY

Photo courtesy of BC & Alberta Guide Dogs

**3** GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING



# BEHIND THE GRANTS

## A message from our Board Chair

First West Foundation is delivering on its promise to community partners through funding and partnership in 2023. The economic challenges of the past year peaked at the Foundation, receiving requests amounting to an increase of 17% over 2022. With strong financial stewardship and a Stabilization Fund fully funded, the Foundation disbursed \$1,092,023 to 104 charities across British Columbia. Focused on the strength of its strategic plan and aspiration to help our communities thrive, the Foundation launched its newest program, SOAR, with a collaborative group of First West team members representing all of First West Credit Union's Employee Network Groups.

Our gratitude goes to First West Credit Union for their unwavering financial support, allowing more of our grant funding to reach charitable organizations. It may be cliché, but it couldn't be truer. None of our work would be possible without the relentless generosity of our donors. We are grateful for your kindness, and we humbly say, thank you for your support!

## A message from our Executive Director

In 2022 First West Foundation took a bold step forward with our commitment to adopt the principles of Trust Based Philanthropy. You will hear us talk about this a lot, and as more Funders lean into the discipline behind the principles, your Foundation will be leading in them.

The creation of the SOAR Grant program, is one we can all be proud of. A collaborative approach taken to ensure equity deserving organizations have access to financial resources and all we can offer, so their organizations and communities can flourish. Multi-year grants have increased and building capacity in the social sector remains a must.

We extend our gratitude to First West team members who give generously each year to the First West Employee Giving campaign administered by the Foundation. In 2023, First West team members donated \$85,816 through payroll deduction.

On behalf of our Board of Directors and Foundation team, thank you to our partner First West Credit Union, our donors and our community partners.

**Chad Lueck, Branch Manager, Hope**  
Envision Financial, a division of  
First West Credit Union

"It was an absolute privilege to participate as a member of the 2023 SOAR Committee. I appreciated the opportunity to nominate organizations that were doing critical work around inclusion that wouldn't normally apply for funding from First West Foundation. The few organizations that I had the privilege of notifying about their approved grants were shocked, delighted and so very grateful. We work for a fantastic company that truly wants everyone to flourish, and I was so honoured to be a part of living it out as a member of the SOAR Committee."

## 2023 Board of Directors

**Richard Hill**  
Board Chair

**Cathy McIntyre**  
Vice Chair

**Paul Challinor**  
Director

**Tom Knoepfel**  
Director

**Balraj Mann**  
Director

## 2023 Foundation Team

Paulo Araujo  
Susan Byrom  
Jackey Zellweger  
Stephanie Perryman  
Sue-Lynda Bate





# ENHANCING OUR IMPACT

First West Foundation is rooted in grantmaking to charities across First West communities.

In 2023, the Board of Directors approved the introduction of impact areas to the Foundation's granting programs. The Foundation is committed to contributing to efforts and impact through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), acknowledging that alone, we can not address the world's significant challenges. However, as a contributing and collaborative partner with charities focused on the same social issues, we can move forward together to create opportunity and impact in our communities.

61 grant recipients identified their alignment to one or more of the SDGs.



## Trust Based Philanthropy in Action

Reduce, reuse and recycle is an acceptable practice for charitable partners writing a grant application to First West Foundation. If it saves time and meets the needs of their program, we know we are meeting our goals in the area of streamlining processes.

Foundational elements of the Foundation's partnership model introduced through Trust Based Philanthropy include reducing time and resources needed by a charity to complete an application or impact report; granting unrestricted funds and placing the trust in leaders who know where the greatest need is in their organization; and providing multi-year funding relationships--sustainable funding for a prescribed period of time, fostering more innovation and opportunity for our partners.

"Thank you for being a leader in the field of philanthropy and taking such a progressive approach to grant-making. You are so thoughtful in your approach and are really putting the needs of charities and the success of their programs first."

In 2023, the Foundation concluded two of its first three multi-year partnerships--Victoria's Burnside Community Resource Centre and Kelowna's YMCA of Southern Interior BC. Maintaining our commitment to multi-year funding, the Foundation entered into several new funding partnerships with a total of investment of \$251,000 by the end of 2025.

### 2023-2024

SHER Vancouver LGBTQ Friends Society  
Abbotsford Hospice & Grief Society

### 2023-2025

Kelowna Community Resources  
Take a Hike Foundation

### 2024-2025

Mother's Against Drunk Drivers



# HELPING OUR COMMUNITIES THRIVE

## TAKE A HIKE FOUNDATION

A first-time Island Savings Community Endowment grantee in 2020, in 2023 Take a Hike Foundation was granted multi-year funding, thanks to First West Foundation's commitment to trust based philanthropy. At the conclusion of 2025, the Foundation will have funded 14 grants, with a total investment of \$196,550 in unrestricted and capacity funds, supporting Take a Hike Foundation's programs operating in all First West regions.

Take a Hike Foundation addresses community needs and the increasing demands for mental health supports for youth experiencing vulnerabilities. The Foundation layers in program elements that are beyond what the public school system can provide, but which are essential to participants' success, such as a full-time registered mental health clinician for each program, outdoor learning, and community involvement opportunities. Their programs are one-of-kind, evidence based, and embedded in the alternative education classroom in British Columbia.

In the Valley First region, Take a Hike Foundation will increase their organizational capacity through planning and development of the Foundation's growth, including launching two new programs in Vernon and Kelowna.

Grants from the Envision Financial Community Endowment and Island Savings Community Endowment enable Take a Hike Foundation to continue providing critical mental health services and life-changing opportunities that support youth in Delta and those across the Island region to improve their health and well-being and succeed.

### IMPACT SNAPSHOT\*

176

Youth participated in programming

1,442  
hours

of individual clinical counselling sessions

387  
hours

of group counselling

3,350  
days

of land-based learning

148.5  
days

of programming (M-F)

\*First West Foundation is proud to contribute to Take A Hike's overall impact through its grantmaking program.

3 GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING



4 QUALITY  
EDUCATION



"Take a Hike has helped me with a lot, including my social skills, anxiety and coping mechanisms. Being in this program helped me with my self-confidence and come out of my shell. I'm very grateful I was a part of this program."

~2023 program participant

Photo courtesy of Take a Hike Foundation

# INSPIRE PHILANTHROPY

Creating opportunities to ignite philanthropic contributions

“The funding offered through First West Foundation helps to ensure there are few to no barriers for participants to attend Go Girls, with the program offered for free with snacks and new, fun activities provided every day!”

*Jessica Forster Broomfield,  
Director of Programs*



*Photo courtesy of Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland*

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

In 2023, the funds under the control of CC&L experienced a growth of \$1,632,243 from \$17,845,286 to \$19,477,529, net of management fees and withdrawals, because of the following:

- Trading Impact of \$32,299
- Interest and Dividends of \$627,377
- Unrealized Gain of \$1,074,536
- Management Fees of (\$101,969)

With inflation stabilizing, global economy resilience against recession, and the expectation that interest rates will begin declining in 2024, equity and bond markets saw an increase in their returns in the fourth quarter. The Foundation’s annualized return since inception increased by 0.1% from 7.8% as of December 31, 2022, to 7.9% as of December 31, 2023.

First West Foundation established a Stabilization Fund in 2012, a cash reserve for grantmaking in years where market conditions produce low or negative revenue returns. The Stabilization Fund of \$1,527,661 is held in four one-year term deposits. Two cashable terms give the Foundation flexibility to maximize interest rate fluctuations. The Fund maintains a balance of the greater of a two-year average distribution or two-year average asset value.

With gratitude, a key contributor to First West Foundation’s overall growth each year is a donation from First West Credit Union. In 2023, First West generously donated \$453,943 to the Foundation. First West also supports all operational expense incurred by Foundation management and team members. This ensures 100% of all donations to the Foundation are used for charitable purposes.



# SOAR Grants

SOAR launched in 2023 to support equity deserving organizations committed to serving racialized groups, including and not limited to people who identify as Black, Brown, Indigenous and/or as a person of colour in communities served by First West Credit Union.

\$206,250 was disbursed to 20 charities. All grants are provided by the respective community endowments.



## Enderby Financial Community Endowment

AL Fortune Secondary School	\$5,000
Enderby & District Community Resource Centre	\$14,000

## Envision Financial Community Endowment

Group ABA Childrens' Society	\$7,500
Qmunity	\$7,500
Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre Association	\$7,500
Rainbow Refugee Society	\$10,000
TFL Technology for Living Society	\$15,000
Odihi	\$15,000
Sher Vancouver LGBTQ Friends Society	\$25,000

## Island Savings Community Endowment

BC Black History Awareness Society	\$6,250
Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA)	\$7,000
Saanich Community Legacy Foundation	\$10,000
Ita Wegman Association of BC for Curative Education & Social Therapy ("Glenora Farm")	\$10,000

## Valley First Community Endowment

The Bridge Youth & Family Services	\$5,000
Okanagan Similkameen Neurological Society	\$6,000
Impact ToolBox	\$7,500
This Space Belongs to You	\$10,000
Niteo Africa Society	\$12,000
South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services	\$12,000
Kamloops Sexual Assault Counselling Centre	\$14,000

# 2023 Grant recipients

First West Foundation introduced its alignment to six Sustainable Development Goals in 2023 and at the same time, reframed its grantmaking program to support the sector.

**Impact grants** are unrestricted grants, investing in an organization's operations, programs, projects, and services. Alignment to the SDGs is mandatory.

**Capacity grants** are restricted grants, disbursed to organizations for the pursuit of education, professional development, training, and infrastructure enhancements. Alignment to the Sustainable Development Goals is not mandatory.

## Enderby Financial Community Endowment

2023 represented the ninth year of granting from the Enderby Financial Community Endowment. Six grants totaling \$36,000 were disbursed.

### Impact Grants

United Way BC	\$1,000
Feed Enderby and District Food Bank	\$2,000
Mothers Against Drunk Drivers	\$3,000
A.L. Fortune Secondary School	\$10,000
Literacy Alliance of the Shuswap Society	\$10,000

### Capacity Grants

North Okanagan Hospice Society	\$10,000
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## Envision Financial Employees Endowment

Grown primarily from donations collected through the Jeans Day program in the Envision region, the Envision Financial Employee Endowment provides grants to charities nominated and selected by Envision Financial team members. In 2023, \$18,000 was disbursed to the following 14 recipients.

West Coast Harmony Chorus of Sweet Adelines International Society	\$500
Langley Animal Protection Society (LAPS)	\$1,000
Read Right Society	\$1,200
CARE Transit	\$1,200
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Fraser Valley	\$1,200
New Hope Community Services	\$1,200
Mackie's Place	\$1,300
Mamas for Mamas	\$1,400
Hope and Area Transition Society	\$1,400
Langley School District Foundation	\$1,500
Chilliwack Hospice Society	\$1,500
Crohn's and Colitis Canada	\$1,500
Cloverdale Community Kitchen	\$1,500
Cyrus Centre	\$1,600



## Envision Financial Community Endowment

The founding endowment of the Foundation, \$427,500 was released to 24 charities in 2023.

### Impact Grants

Mission Literacy in Motion	\$3,000
Shelter Movers	\$5,000
Mothers Against Drunk Drivers	\$12,000
Surrey North Delta – Meal on Wheels	\$15,000
Stigma Free Society	\$15,000
Langley Hospice Society	\$17,500
Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland	\$20,000
Ann Davis Transition House	\$20,000
Rick's Heart Foundation	\$20,000
BC and Alberta Guide Dogs	\$20,000
Chilliwack Resource Centre	\$20,000
Muslim Food Bank	\$20,000
Ridge Meadows Senior Society	\$25,000
Kitimat General Hospital	\$25,000
BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation	\$25,000
Langley Care Foundation	\$25,000
Fraser Region Community Justice Initiatives Association	\$25,000
Emotions Health and Wellness Society	\$25,000
Take a Hike Youth at Risk Foundation	\$25,000
Phoenix Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Education Society	\$25,000

### Capacity Grants

BeMorr	\$10,000
Breakfast Club of Canada	\$10,000
Care for Women Foundation	\$10,000
Creative Centre Society for Mental Wellness	\$10,000

## Island Savings Community Endowment

In its seventh year of granting, the Island Savings Community Endowment distributed \$129,450 to 12 charities.

### Impact Grants

Salt Spring Island Foundation	\$1,950
1000X5 Children's Book Recycling Project Society	\$10,000
Vancouver Island Counselling Centre for Immigrants & Refugees Assn.	\$10,000
Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust	\$10,000
Cowichan Lake Community Services	\$10,000
Victoria Disability Resource Centre	\$10,000
United Way BC	\$10,000
Victoria Compost and Conservation Education Centre	\$15,000
Nanaimo Community Kitchens Society	\$15,000
Burnside Gorge Community Association	\$25,000

### Capacity Grants

Abbyfield House Society	\$2,500
NEED2 – Suicide Prevention Education and Support	\$10,000

## Valley First Community Endowment

The Valley First Community Endowment distributed \$158,000 to 13 charities.

### Impact Grants

Project Literacy Central Okanagan	\$5,000
Hope Outreach	\$5,000
Borderline Personality Disorder Society of BC	\$5,000
Penticton and District Community Art Council	\$10,000
United Way BC	\$11,500
Third Space	\$15,000
Okanagan Fruit Tree Society	\$15,000
Kelowna Community Resources (KCR)	\$15,000
Launch Financial Education Society	\$15,000
YMCA of Okanagan	\$31,500

### Capacity Grants

Pathways Addiction Resource Centre	\$10,000
Helen's Acres, Kelowna Trinity Baptist Church Legacy Foundation,	\$10,000
Breakfast Club of Canada	\$10,000

## First West Credit Union Leaders Fund

Established in 2015, the Leaders Fund provides much needed grants for organizational capacity and professional development programs and projects. In 2023, the Fund granted \$45,500 to six charities.

Operation Freedom Paws	\$5,000
Alouette River Management Society	\$5,000
South Okanagan Similkameen Volunteer Centre	\$5,500
Nanaimo Food Share Society	\$10,000
Autism Support Network Society	\$10,000
Mackie's Place	\$10,000

## Keeping A Good Thing Growing

We believe to help communities thrive we need to invest in our charities and their future goals. Keeping A Good Thing Growing focuses on supporting initiatives that enhance an organization's ability to grow its capacity, programs, or services. Two grants were released in 2023 totaling \$21,248.

Modern Man Family Project	\$6,248
Abbotsford Hospice & Grief Support Society	\$15,000

Abbotsford Hospice & Grief Support Society launched its innovative Grief Support Course in September 2023, designed, and created with a \$25,000 Envision Financial Community Endowment grant in 2022. First West Foundation is pleased to provide a two-year commitment to Abbotsford Hospice & Grief Support Society for the delivery of this 30 hour, UFV accredited course.



## Named Endowment Fund Disbursements

Frank Jamieson Memorial High School		
Curling Bursary Fund	Recognizing Chilliwack Secondary School Student	\$400
Mark Warawa Legacy Fund	Wagner Hills Farm Society	\$412
Sally O'Sullivan Legacy Fund	SOS Children's Village BC	\$938
Ben H. Voth Legacy Fund	Construction Foundation of BC	\$1,347
Gord & Enrica Huston Fund	BC Cancer Foundation	\$1,736
Haukeland Family Legacy Fund	Watoto Canada, MS Society of Canada, BC Lupus Society	\$2,398
Dewar Family Legacy Fund	Victoria Hospitals Foundation, Movember Canada	\$2,882
Peter Podovnikoff Fund	Scholarships for Kwantlen Polytechnic University Students	\$4,198
SOS Children's Village BC	Youth programs	\$7,299
Peter Bell Legacy Fund	Seniors' programming in Enderby	\$21,728

## Flow through grants

First West team members give generously each year through payroll deduction to First West's signature cause food bank partners, and First West Foundation's selected charitable partners. In 2023, First West Foundation also received donations to support individuals and families impacted by the devastating wildfires throughout the Central Okanagan. Flow through grants totaled \$84,116.

Peachland Food Bank	\$42.00	Kelowna Gospel Mission	\$1,604.05
Whitevalley Community Resource Centre	\$72.00	United Way BC	\$1,661.50
Feed Enderby and District Food Bank	\$104.00	SAHRE Family & Community Services	\$1,685.00
Lumby Food Bank Society	\$120.00	Victoria Mustard Seed Food Bank	\$1,862.00
Hope Food Bank	\$229.00	Sources White Rock/South Surrey Food Bank	\$1,900.00
Salvation Army Vernon Food Bank	\$252.00	Abbotsford Food Bank	\$2,304.00
Salt Spring Island Food Bank	\$260.00	Sources Langley Food Bank	\$2,420.00
Fraser Valley Gleaners	\$414.00	BC Cancer Foundatoin	\$2,541.00
Oliver Food Bank	\$442.00	Cowichan Valley Basket Society	\$2,551.00
Saanich Peninsula Lions Food Bank	\$457.00	Central Okanagan Foundation	\$2,566.67
Princeton Food Bank	\$468.00	Mamas for Mamas	\$2,566.67
Sooke Food Bank Society	\$527.00	South Delta Food Bank	\$2,929.00
Nanaimo Loaves & Fishes Community Food Bank	\$548.00	Salvation Army Cawston/Keremeos Food Bank	\$2,930.67
SOS Children's Village BC	\$572.00	Chilliwack Community Food Bank	\$3,417.00
Goldstream Food Bank	\$625.00	Surrey Food Bank	\$3,422.00
CMS Food Bank Society	\$629.00	Kamloops Food Bank	\$3,724.67
Friends in Need Food Bank	\$637.00	Central Okanagan Food Bank	\$5,598.67
Tillicm Lelum Aboriginal Society	\$676.00	Salvation Army Penticton Food Bank	\$7,202.00
Kitimat Food Bank	\$771.00	BC Children's Hospital Foundation	\$18,608.00
United Way Southern Vancouver Island	\$990.00		
Chemainus Harvest House	\$1,212.00		
St. Joseph's Food Bank	\$1,254.00		
Okanagan Boys & Girls Clubs	\$1,321.00		
(Armstrong Food Bank)			

# We couldn't have done it without your generous support!



*Photo courtesy of Langley Meals on Wheels*

## Thank you

to our donors and  
community partners.



[info@firstwestfoundation.ca](mailto:info@firstwestfoundation.ca)



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[www.firstwestfoundation.ca](http://www.firstwestfoundation.ca)



(250) 487-7337

First West Foundation is proud to be the charitable partner to First West Credit Union and its regional divisions, Enderby & District Financial, Envision Financial, Island Savings, and Valley First.

As part of its annual community investment, First West provides the Foundation with an annual donation, a portion of which covers the Foundation's operational costs, ensuring 100% of your donation has charitable impact.

First West Foundation is grateful every day for the privilege of working and serving its communities on the unceded, ancestral, and traditional territory of Coast Salish peoples, specifically the S'ólh Téméxw (Stó:lō), Nuxwsa'7aq (Nooksack), Kwantlen, šx"məθk"əyəmaʔt təməx" (Musqueam), Stz'uminus, sqəciyaʔt təməx" (Katzie), Ntəʔkepmx Tmíx" (Nlaka'pamux), Semiahmoo, scəwaθenaʔt təməx" (Tsawwassen), Á,LENENEŁ ŁTE (WSÁNEĆ) and xà'isla w áwís (Haisla).