



TAMARACK

2016

PROGRESS AND IMPACT REPORT

Connecting for Change

A LETTER FROM
TAMARACK

THE LEARNING
CENTRE

VIBRANT
COMMUNITIES

DEEPENING
COMMUNITY

OPERATIONS
AND FINANCE

 TAMARACK
INSTITUTE

When we seek for connection, we restore the world to wholeness. Our seemingly separate lives become meaningful as we discover how truly necessary we are to each other.

- Margaret J. Wheatley

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A Letter from Tamarack

In 2016, Tamarack continued to equip and inspire community change practitioners to go out and make the world a better place.

As a connected force for change, we are helping to build stronger, healthier, more vibrant communities across Canada and beyond.

2016 was a year of exciting events and achievements. We delivered major learning events on our five idea areas: community engagement, collective impact, collaborative leadership, community innovation, and evaluating community impact, and profiled these ideas on our new website. Visit us at tamarackcommunity.ca and be inspired!

In 2016, Tamarack continued to lead the way in advancing community change, hosting major summits on reducing poverty and strengthening neighbourhoods.

We published six important papers on the theme of community change, and dramatically increased the number of learning days we delivered. We re-imagined our signature multi-day event, the Community Change Institute, and hosted it for more than 220 change-makers from nine countries.

To help learners from all walks of life attend our events, we launched the Be A Light Scholarship Fund, and are grateful to everyone who contributed to this fund to share the light of learning.

We are also deeply grateful to our major partners who make our work possible, including: The J. W. McConnell Family Foundation, Maytree, Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. At the end of 2016, we were thrilled to welcome a new partner, Suncor Energy Foundation, and we are excited to be working together over the next several years to advance innovative community engagement and development work across Canada.

We thank each and every person who has connected with Tamarack in 2016. At the core of our work are people like you who are contributing, learning, and sharing across many organizations and audiences. When we learn and work together, we become a collective force for change. This is how we make our communities safer and more vibrant, how we end poverty, and how we deepen our commitment to the power of community.

Thank you for your support through yet another incredible year.

Paul Born, Tamarack President
Alan Broadbent, Board Chairman

Thank You!

Our work would not be possible without our financial partners and sponsors. We thank you wholeheartedly for your contributions that help enable us all to be a connected force for community change.



Highlights

Learners collectively spent over
15,192 days
in our seminars and workshops

174,689

unique visitors joined us online to learn
(14,557 per month on average)

316

registrants took part in Communities of Practice on evaluation, deepening community, collective impact and community engagement

10,633

people were subscribers to **Engage!** magazine

18 Thought Leaders

contributed their knowledge to the Tamarack learning community

19,774

resources were downloaded during 2016

Learners invested **\$900,000+**

to participate in seminars and workshops, which we re-invested in developing learning products and programs

330 people

participated in our second national poverty reduction summit in Edmonton

Tamarack: The Year in Review

Tamarack brings people together to make their work of advancing positive community change easier and more effective.

In 2016, we strengthened this mission through a number of events and happenings:

- In January, we launched a three-year partnership with the Ontario Trillium Foundation, dedicated to building collective impact capacity in communities across the province.
- In April, our Vibrant Communities summit in Edmonton convened more than 330 people, including elected municipal officials and staff representing 43 cities, to highlight municipal leadership in reducing poverty in Canada.
- In June, we launched a brand new website featuring a robust and well-organized resource library, a profile of our five Idea Areas, and a heightened commitment to presenting the latest news and thinking in community change.
- In June, our Deepening Community annual gathering convened 150 community-builders to discuss *Resilient Neighbourhoods: When People Care*. This event also marked the launch of ABCD Canada at the request of ABCD co-founder, John McKnight.
- In September, our annual Community Change Institute event drew 225 learners from nine countries – Canada, the United States, Australia, Cameroon, Denmark, Israel, Japan, Pakistan, and Scotland – to tackle community change through an “Art of Disruption” theme.
- In September, Tamarack published thought leadership papers on five topics, including the next iteration of collective impact, a new framework for



evaluating poverty reduction, developing community resilience, working together for community change, and practicing disruptive leadership.

- Also in September, we hosted a photo exhibit, *Together: When We Are Engaged*, at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ontario, as a visual depiction of the potential for good that can arise from an engaged community.
- Throughout the year, Tamarack directors provided consulting and coaching services across Canada, the U.S., and Australia.
- We launched the Be A Light Scholarship Fund to extend the learning as widely as possible through contributions from generous supporters.

Our enduring belief is that by helping to engage citizens to act collaboratively for the common good, our work contributes to the building of a more peaceful, equitable society.

Going Forward

In 2016, we reorganized Tamarack internally for greater impact, and we will move into 2017 as a streamlined organization that is rigorously focused on equipping our members with the tools, resources, and knowledge they need.

As part of our reorganization, we envision a new Knowledge and Communications division that will profile the very latest in community change thinking and action. To fulfill this commitment, we are identifying more than 100 sources of ideas (a diverse network of authors, thought leaders, universities, institutes and organizations) that we will regularly review and harvest from in order to disseminate the best ideas and resources from this wide array of thinking to our members. Stay tuned for a curated learning experience!

Five-Year Snapshot:

In 2012, 10,000 people engaged with us during the year. By 2016, that number had risen to 22,000 people – an increase of 110%.

Highlights

22 webinars
were held with 3,172 people registered

8 multi-day workshops were held with 1,394 people participating

20,906 members of the Tamarack Learning Community

33 one-day workshops were held with 1,685 people participating

79 partner organizations helped to host local events

108 custom training events were delivered in cities across Canada, the United States, and Australia, with 6,983 participants

Learning Centre

The Tamarack Learning Centre was a hive of activity in 2016.

Tamarack's focus on five key idea areas provided our learners with innovative tools, resources, learning events, workshops and webinars. These idea areas, which are pivotal to community change practitioners, are:

- **Collective Impact**
- **Community Engagement**
- **Collaborative Leadership**
- **Community Innovation**
- **Evaluating Community Impact**

Unique in 2016 was a partnership with the Ontario Trillium Foundation to deliver collective impact capacity-building services across the province. These services included 27 introductory workshops on collective impact, 17 webinars hosted jointly by Tamarack and the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and coaching supports to community partners interested in advancing their collective impact efforts. This partnership will continue in 2017 and 2018.

The Tamarack Learning Centre experienced growth in all aspects of service delivery with more learners engaging in webinars, workshops, accessing custom services and partnering with Tamarack on custom events. Of special note are Tamarack partners including the Georgia Health Policy Center, The Civic Canopy in Denver, Colorado, Collaborating for Impact and Together SA in Australia, and Lambton Community Development Services, who each co-hosted workshops for their members with Tamarack. Tamarack welcomes and values the opportunity to collaborate with partners who are committed to advancing and supporting the learning of their members.

We are proud to have worked with organizations across the globe in 2016 to help strengthen their community change efforts.

- | | |
|--|---|
| Alameda County Office of Education | New Dawn Enterprises |
| Alberta Council on Disability Services | Ohio University |
| Alberta Health | Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health |
| Alberta Government/Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations | Ontario Museum Association |
| Anglicare Tasmania | Ottawa Coalition of Community Houses |
| Association of Community Legal Clinics | |
| Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs | Palm Healthcare Foundation |
| | Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network |
| B'More for Healthy Babies | People First of Ontario |
| | Social Planning Council of Cambridge & North Dumfries |
| Canadian Evaluation Society – National Capital Chapter | |
| Canadian Open Dialogue Forum | Refugee & Citizenship Canada |
| Catch Coalition | Region of Waterloo |
| Carya | Revelstoke Community Social Development |
| Community First Impacts of Community Engagement | |
| Children's Health Alliance | Southern Oregon Success |
| Chittenden County Opioid Alliance | Thunder Bay District Health Unit |
| CityMatch | The Civic Canopy |
| City of Grande Prairie | The Exchange – Caledon Community Services |
| City of Prince George | The Peoples Church |
| City of Windsor | Together SA |
| Collaboration for Impact | Toronto Public Library |
| Columbia Institute | |
| Community Centres SA | UFCW Canada |
| COTA – TAEH | United Way Halifax |
| Durham Workforce Authority | United Way of Central Iowa |
| | United Way Vermont |
| Education Coalition of Macon County | United Way of Winnipeg |
| Etobicoke Children's Centre | United States Breastfeeding Committee |
| Family and Community Support Services | University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point |
| Association of Alberta FuseSocial | |
| Georgia Health Policy Center | Waterloo Child & Youth Table |
| | Wellborn Baptist Foundation |
| Headwaters Communities in Action | Women & HIV/AIDS Initiative (WHA) |
| Healthy Start | |
| Healthy Start Fort Worth | Youth Link |
| | |
| Impact DuPage | Zero to Three TEU |
| | |
| JVS Toronto | <i>Our partners invested nearly \$850,000 in our consulting services, which we re-invested into the organization.</i> |
| Kahnawake | |
| | |
| Lambton County Developmental Services | |
| | |
| Maine Cancer Foundation | |
| Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services | |
| Missouri Foundation for Health | |
| | |
| National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health | |

Going Forward

Tamarack Learning Services will launch two new multi-day workshops in 2017 – a workshop on Collective Impact 3.0 and an innovative, reflective workshop on collaborative leadership. To co-host one of our workshops, please contact: tamarack@tamarackcommunity.ca.

Last year we forged innovative capacity-building partnerships with the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Ontario Rural Institute, and Kahnawake Coalition on Social Responsibility and Self-Sufficiency, and these will continue in 2017, focusing on collective impact and collaborative leadership development.

Our new website features resources, tools, and the latest thinking on community change efforts. We invite you to post your thoughts, tools, and blogs. Visit regularly, as the Tamarack team will regularly scan more than 100 websites, social media posts, and thought leader pieces to ensure we fulfill our promise: To bring you the most current thinking on community change.

Five-Year Snapshot:

In 2012, we hosted 5 multi-day learning events with just under 1,000 participants. In 2016, we hosted 8 multi-day events with 1,394 participants, a 40% increase.

Highlights

1,891

people were subscribers to *Cities Connect* e-magazine

3,724

resources were downloaded during 2016

12 provinces and territories

have poverty reduction strategies or are working to develop one

1,723 people

participated in a Vibrant Communities Canada webinar event

54 members

are part of the Cities Reducing Poverty network, comprising 174 individual communities

865

people were members of the Vibrant Communities Canada learning community

332

people participated in the *Cities Reducing Poverty: When Mayors Lead* summit held in Edmonton, Alberta in April 2016

Vibrant Communities

Over the last 15 years, Vibrant Communities Canada has been building a network of cities committed to reducing poverty.

The Cities Reducing Poverty network is a collective impact movement of 54 member cities or regions, comprising 174 individual communities. Together, they aim to reduce poverty through local interventions at the individual and household levels and through policy and systems change.

Our members share tools, resources, and learning through an interactive website, online and face-to-face seminars, regular community of practice calls, and workshops. We also support our members through access to professional coaching, a shared evaluation approach, resource development assistance, policy tools, and an annual in-person gathering.

In a 2016 survey, our members reported that being part of the Vibrant Communities network has expanded their understanding, motivation, and capacity, and enhanced the credibility of their work. They appreciate accessing a space for dialogue and networking, inspiring one another with “ideas that work,” building momentum, and feeling “part of something bigger.”

These local, multi-sector initiatives are bolstered by provincial and territorial poverty reduction strategies and by the federal government’s recent mandate to develop a national poverty reduction strategy – all part of a growing momentum for poverty reduction in Canada.



In April 2016, Vibrant Communities hosted 332 people at our second national summit, *Cities Reducing Poverty: When Mayors Lead*. The event brought together poverty reduction practitioners, people with lived experience, and elected municipal officials and staff to explore municipal leadership in reducing poverty. Participants represented 43 cities and provincial officials from four provinces/territories. At this event, we released *TEN: A Guide for Cities Reducing Poverty*, which features stories of progress from 10 cities, emerging ideas and innovations to reduce poverty, and a self-assessment guide cities can use to assess their readiness to launch a poverty reduction strategy.

Each year more communities join the Cities Reducing Poverty network, helping to strengthen our collective learning and national impact. To learn more about the benefits of membership please visit tamarackcommunity.ca/cities-reducing-poverty-signup.

www.vibrantcommunities.ca

Going Forward

In April 2017, our annual summit, *Cities Reducing Poverty: When Business is Engaged*, will focus on why and how the business sector is participating in poverty reduction and the role of business leaders in addressing major challenges like food security, education, financial empowerment, and equitable participation in the economy. A new publication will be shared at the summit that will present stories of businesses that have successfully impacted poverty.

Another exciting part of the 2017 Vibrant Communities agenda is the expansion of our Game Changer Approach to Poverty Reduction Strategy and Evaluation, which will examine and assess the top poverty reduction priorities of Cities Reducing Poverty members from across the country. A new policy clearinghouse that parallels the game changer approach will also be distributed to Vibrant Communities followers this year.

To stay up to date on the latest poverty reduction news and learning opportunities, please sign up for Tamarack’s *Cities Connect* newsletter at events.tamarackcommunity.org/cities-connect-subscribe.

Five-Year Snapshot:

In 2012, 39 member cities with local poverty reduction initiatives were connected to the Vibrant Communities learning network. In 2016, 54 cities are connected – an increase of 72%.

Highlights

Partnered with
5 new communities
to host local
Deepening Community Initiatives

158 learners were welcomed to Edmonton for our national gathering

Hosted **14** webinars which attracted **942** registrants

Launched **ABCD** in Canada
by special request from founder
John McKnight

Grew our Neighbourhood Strategy Leaders' Community of Practice to include **30** members from **24** municipalities

Welcomed **a multi-year funding** commitment from Suncor Energy Foundation to advance the work of Deepening Community

Deepening Community

2016 was a breakthrough year for Tamarack's Deepening Community practice area.

Deepening Community focuses on identifying, sharing, and celebrating effective approaches for connecting neighbours, and fostering collaboration between citizens, organizations, and governments to create stronger, more engaged communities.

Within Canada and worldwide, isolation and loneliness are growing realities for people of all ages. The relationship between isolation and individual health has been well documented. There is also mounting evidence of a correlation between people's feeling of connection and their willingness to work for the common good. To date, there are few solutions for achieving greater social connectedness. This is the purpose of Tamarack's Deepening Community Practice Area.

We are exploring strategies to: engage and reconnect community members; enable them to create positive futures together; and empower citizens to collaborate with other sectors to create stronger communities. This, in turn, creates communities that are more resilient and better able to address complex challenges such as aging populations, extreme weather events, poverty, and income disparity.

The work of Deepening Community will advance in 2017 through three complementary strategies.

1. Host 5 New Deepening Community Initiatives – We will partner with communities to implement local action learning projects that use

facilitated conversations to connect neighbours, support them to generate a shared vision for their community, and help them identify projects to realize that vision. Our goal is to host 25 such initiatives by 2020.

2. Link Neighbourhood Strategy Leaders to Accelerate their Impact – This community of practice now has 30 members from across Canada who are senior municipal staff tasked with implementing comprehensive neighbourhood strategies. By learning together, these innovative leaders access each others' wisdom, share best practices, and accelerate the effectiveness of their work. Our goal is to link 50 strategy leaders by 2020.

3. Support a Growing and Dynamic National Learning Community – This dynamic community offers change-makers from around the world an opportunity to connect virtually and access an array of resources and knowledge. We also sponsor single-day workshops and an annual, face-to-face gathering that profiles the most promising examples of the power and possibility of deepening community.

www.deepeningcommunity.ca

Going Forward

Building on the solid momentum of the past year, Deepening Community will focus on advancing a proactive, intentional effort to hold on to, and build on, the connections between us, connections that help resist the pull of negative responses to the complexity of our times.

By expanding our three primary strategies, we will engage diverse community leaders to learn together and identify the shifts in thinking, skills and approaches required to reweave the social fabric of our communities. We are so pleased to welcome our new partner, Suncor Energy Foundation, in this endeavour.

Five-Year Snapshot:

In 2012, we were just beginning to explore this work. In 2016, Deepening Community is a robust national movement with long-term funding partners, bold, five-year goals, and a clear strategy for achieving them.

Highlights

Learners invested

\$910,000

to participate in seminars and workshops. These funds were re-invested back into developing learning products and programs.

14

remote offices located throughout Canada

16

staff located across Canada

\$2.34 million

operating budget

Board-restricted reserve fund continued to hold above

\$1 million,

ensuring Tamarack remains active, sustainable, and poised for growth in the long term

Five-Year Snapshot:

In 2012, we had an operating budget of \$823,000. By 2016, our budget had grown to \$2.34 million.

Operations & Finance

The Operations team develops and maintains systems to ensure Tamarack is efficient and well run, and that staff are happy and productive. In 2016, the team developed and implemented a People Team policy, updated and streamlined financial processes, and implemented a database reporting system. Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement is a registered charity supported by member contributions, foundations, businesses and government, as well as through revenue generated from consulting, coaching, and custom workshops and learning events. The Tamarack team and our Treasurer follow best practices in all our accounting procedures and we are audited annually. Tamarack's full audited statements are available upon request. Please email paul@tamarackcommunity.ca to request a copy.

BOARD

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Nathan Gilbert
Vice Chair

Colin Robertson
Treasurer

Vali Bennett
Corporate Secretary

Paul Born
President

DIRECTORS

Paul Born
President

Liz Weaver
Vice President & Director, Learning Centre

Mark Holmgren
Director, Vibrant Communities

Sylvia Cheuy
Director, Deepening Community

Lisa Attygalle
Director, Engagement

Kristine Culp – Associate Director,
Strategic Engagement

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Community Animator, Finance & Administration

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Jana Harris
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Alison Homer
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Community Animator, Deepening Community

Stephanie Murray
Community Animator, Learning Centre

Natasha Pei
Community Animator, Vibrant Communities

Megan Wanless
Community Animator, Engagement

Going Forward

In 2017, Tamarack is poised for exciting growth. Meeting the needs of our members is paramount, so we plan to implement knowledge and communications tools that fulfill our promise of being the best place to go for the latest thinking in community change.

We plan to refresh our events with new curriculum, so we can continue to provide our members with the best experience possible. And we will explore adding another level of member services to provide greater value to community change-makers.

We are deeply grateful for our many partners who help make our work possible. In 2017, we will pursue new relationships at the federal and provincial government level, and with private and corporate foundations who want to be part of a connected force for positive social change in Canada.

Finally, having reorganized internally in 2016, we will focus on solidifying our roles and on moving forward together with clarity, passion, and purpose. Liz Weaver will lead as Acting President until September, when Paul Born, President, will resume his full managerial role.

In 2017, as always, our goal is to equip and inspire the people who are creating positive change in their communities – and who are building a better world for everyone.



Tamarack Institute

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Charitable Registration Number:

862808615RR0001

Our Vision:

Building a
connected force for
community change

Our Mission:

Collaboratively create
vibrant communities by
engaging learning leaders.

When we are effective in strengthening community capacity to engage citizens, lead collaboratively, deepen community and innovate in place, our work will contribute to the building of a more equitable, prosperous, and cohesive society.