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Summer Newsletter 2023



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A Message From the Chair



Greetings, friends and neighbours!

I hope this newsletter finds you well and thriving in our beautiful rural communities of Nova Scotia. As our new Board Chair, I would like to shine a spotlight on how RCFNS has played a crucial role in supporting and empowering our local areas.

RCFNS is a beacon of hope and progress, dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in our rural communities. Founded over two decades ago, this remarkable foundation has been instrumental in fostering sustainable development, addressing key challenges, and nurturing the unique spirit that defines rural Nova Scotia.

One of the most impressive aspects of the RCFNS is its unwavering commitment to community engagement and empowerment. The foundation firmly believes that positive change starts from within and understands the importance of supporting grassroots initiatives. Using our three pillars; *granting*, *convening*, and *fund development*, the staff and board members of RCFNS have been really busy over the past couple of months.

such as the *Investment Readiness*, *Gender Equality*, *Recovery Fund*, *Ukrainian Resettlement Grant*, and the *Joan Feynman Climate Change Fund*. We are now initiating the development of the *Dave Gunn Zero Hunger Campaign* for schools in Nova Scotia and the *We Rise Again Fund*, developed to help those impacted by the wildfires here in the Nova Scotia recently. We understand that each community has its own strengths and challenges, and as such, we strive to provide targeted support to ensure maximum effectiveness. From funding for infrastructure improvements to supporting education and healthcare initiatives, RCFNS is at the forefront of creating positive change in this process.

We at RCFNS, currently held a Convening Session in April on Climate Impact in Sydney, Cape Breton with over 20 organizations represented throughout the province to come together and share how they are creating capacity for climate action in their communities. Recently, we also, had representation at the Community Foundations of Canada ReConnect 2023 conference held in Toronto. Our board members eagerly received professional development on all things community oriented. From sessions on grant fund development techniques, to mobilizing Vital Signs in your community, to sessions on building cooperate partnerships and climate change action, our team was eager to learn and came away from the conference as being highlighted as a foundation to watch and learn from.

Furthermore, our foundation recognizes the power of collaboration. We actively seek and foster partnerships with community organizations, businesses, and government agencies to leverage resources and amplify their impact. Through these collaborations, the RCFNS has been able to initiate transformative projects mentioned above.

At RCFNS, our dedication to inclusivity is also commendable. We recognize that a diverse and inclusive community is a strong community. The foundation actively supports projects and initiatives that promote equity, celebrate diversity, and foster social cohesion. By providing a platform for marginalized voices to be heard and empowering underrepresented groups, the RCFNS is creating a more vibrant, resilient, and welcoming rural Nova Scotia. If you're interested in getting involved through our *Granting*, *Fund Development*, and *Convening* or learning more about the RCFNS, I encourage you to visit our website or reach out to their dedicated team. Together, let's continue to support and uplift our rural communities, ensuring a brighter future for generations to come.

Remember, it's in the strength of our connections and the power of collective action that we find the true essence of our rural communities. I feel so much pride in being part of RCFNS!

Until next time,

Jessica Fancy-Landry, Chair, Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia

A Message From the Executive Director



Are we already halfway through 2023?! Time flies when you are busy!

First, I want to recognize how difficult and scary the past few weeks have been. We Nova Scotians are a resilient bunch, but over those past few years our resilience has been tested, there is no doubt about that! Fortunately, Nova Scotia has an amazing social and community work ethic that leans into difficult times. Our foundation in partnership with the *Community Foundation of Nova Scotia* and the *Unlooweg Indigenous Community Foundation* quickly mobilized to reopen the *We Rise Again Fund*. Unfortunately, that fund was originally created because of another terrible disaster that took place in April 2021. But the strong relationships that were formed because of this paved the way for a quick response to future disasters.

The new Board of RCFNS is reinvigorated to learn more about the UN Sustainable Development Goals. We have changed our meeting formats to address those goals and were RCFNS sits in its action. We will be opening fund and taking training to learn about and address Goal #5 Gender Equality, Goal #13 Climate Action, Goal #11 Sustainable Cities, Goal #2 Zero Hunger and Goal #10 Reduce Inequalities through our own policies.

Much more to come in the coming SECOND half of 2023!

Penny Cooper, Executive Director, Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia

We Rise Again Fund-Wildfire Relief



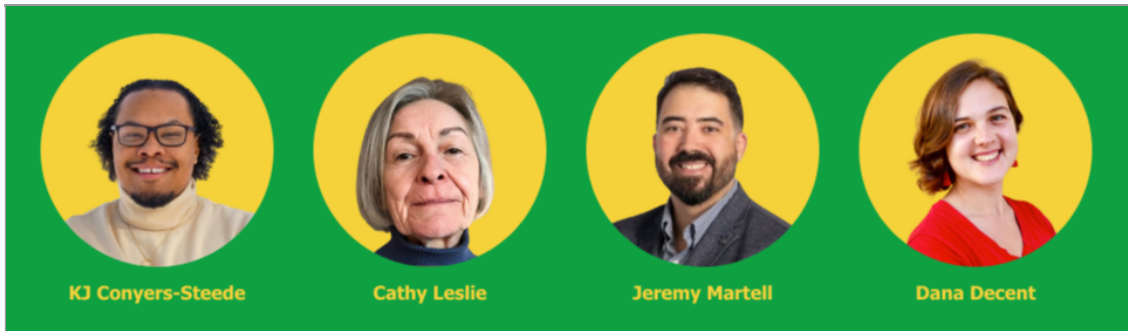
As Nova Scotians continue to deal with wildfires, evacuation orders and the aftermath of those wildfires now under control, the We Rise Again Fund has been set up to help communities rebuild from the devastation, including mental health supports.

Established with a \$100,000 donation from an anonymous donor, the We Rise Again Fund is facilitated by the Community Foundation of Nova Scotia, in partnership with Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia and Unlooweg Indigenous Communities Foundation. It is intended to help with long-term recovery efforts, be it mental health supports, infrastructure, climate adaption



Welcome RCFNS' new Board Members

It's important to have individuals who are committed to supporting rural communities and making a positive impact in Nova Scotia. The Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia have no doubt that Kjeld Mizpah (KJ) Conyers-Steede, Cathy Leslie, Jeremy Martell, and Dana Decent will bring their unique perspectives and skills to the foundation and its ongoing work. It will be exciting to see what we can achieve together.



Community Impact Conference: Climate Commitments In Action

The Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia recently hosted a thought-provoking conference titled "Community Impact Conference: Climate Commitments In Action." The event brought together community leaders, activists, and experts to explore practical solutions and initiatives aimed at addressing climate change at the grassroots level. The conference featured notable speakers, including Dana Decent from Community Foundations and Elder Albert Marshall.

The conference also provided a platform for local organizations and businesses to showcase their climate commitments and initiatives. From community gardens and composting projects to renewable energy installations and climate education programs, these inspiring showcases demonstrated the diversity and ingenuity of community-led efforts in Nova Scotia.



Community Foundation of Canada REConnect 2023 Conference

RCFNS attended the CFC REConnect 2023 conference held in Tkaronto/Toronto in June. What an amazing opportunity to connect and reconnect with community foundations from across Canada, United States, Australia and even Ukraine! The theme of the event was reconnect but the underlying message was belonging.

Did you know that 29% of individuals across Canada do not feel a sense of belonging with their community? Relationships matter, community matters and belonging matters to your well-being. People who have a strong sense of belonging create strong communities. If close to 1/3 of Canadians do not feel a sense of belonging, that means that many of our communities are suffering.

This conference renewed our connections and our sense of belonging to the Community Foundation movement. It also inspired us to continue and expand our work in communities. We learned about the strength of equity, diversity and inclusion leading to a decent workplace environment. We learned that the UN Sustainable Goals are real and should be worked on in each of our communities to create stronger and healthier communities. We also learned about the technical side of running a Community Foundation and the importance of relationship building through transparency and honesty. We are truly better together, and that togetherness turns into belonging.



Current & Emerging Funds



This fund was created in 2019 with a private donor grant in order to ignite creativity, innovation and change through community projects on climate change. During the next 3-5 years RCFNS plans to greatly increase our Feynman Fund granting and to coordinate with other sectors to leverage progress on climate change throughout the province.



Cape Breton Country Recording Artist Drake Jensen has collaborated with the Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia to create a fund for persons who identify with LGBTQI+ and work with the community. He is generously donating 100% of the profits from his new single, "Rise Again".

[Click Here to Learn More](#)

Projects



Your land & property gift to the Rural Community Foundation of Nova Scotia can create a lasting legacy for generations to come. We would like to work with you to make your tax creditable gifts transform the sustainability of rural communities. You can give your home or cottage, vacant land or investment properties to the Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia.

Together we can develop grants for a program you and your family are passionate about. Imagine, your family legacy strengthening rural community!

[Click Here to Learn More](#)

Vital Signs

Vital Signs is Canada's most extensive community-driven data program. Spearheaded by Community Foundations of Canada and led by the Rural Community Foundation of Nova Scotia and around the world, more than 65 national community foundations and 41 international community foundations produce an informative Vital Signs web site. Vital Signs uses local knowledge to measure the vitality of a

at the community level. Vital Signs aims to inspire civic engagement, to provide focus for public debate, and to help a range of individuals and community organizations take action and direct resources where they will have the greatest impact. RCFNS will be launching their Vital Signs web site in 2023/24 once all information is uploaded.

[For more information:](#)

Land & Real Estate Donations

A charitable gift of property can make a lasting difference to our rural communities throughout Nova Scotia. Making a charitable gift of real estate through the Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia (RCFNS) can help you turn your property gains into community good. The value of your real estate may exceed that of any other asset you own. With the help of RCFNS, you can use it to fulfil your charitable interests and receive financial and tax benefits.

[For more information:](#)

Gifts in Wills and Estates

Remembering your rural community with a planned gift is a way of giving that is thoughtful, generous and helps change the future of your community. By making a planned gift today you are part of a growing community that leaves a legacy that helps sustain your rural community. Making a gift in your will is simple and you still retain control of your assets. You can bequeath cash, securities, property or even a percentage of your estate.

[For more information:](#)

Donor Advised Fund

A donor advised fund is a charitable giving vehicle. It is initially established through an up-front donation by a donor - such as an individual philanthropist or family - to the Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia. While you, the donor, advises how funds are distributed, all administrative, operating and governance matters are taken care of by RCFNS. Donor advised funds are ideal for those

direct where the work is to be done and we do all the work!

[For more information:](#)



Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia is a member of the Community Foundations of Canada



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