

50 VITAL COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

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SSCF releases report from 50 Vital Community Conversations program

The South Saskatchewan Community Foundation (SSCF) today released the report that kickstarted its 50th anniversary and is called – **50 Vital Community Conversations**.

The Conversations embraced widespread interest involving nearly 2000 individuals in 56 unique community-based conversations, led by 47 registered charities across southern Saskatchewan in early 2019.

SSCF Executive Director, Donna Ziegler, says the response to the program has been truly inspiring.

“Our summary report speaks to uncovering the challenges, understanding the community needs and planning for change together,” says Ziegler. “In so many ways, the report underscores the hopes and dreams of the SSCF which is to support a thriving community with a culture of sharing, generosity, and inclusivity at its core.”

The research analysis of the reports submitted by the host organizations was conducted by Dr. Iryna Khovrenkov, an economist with research interests in philanthropic foundations and charitable giving, social finance and applied microeconomics, from the University of Regina. Khovrenkov’s review of the final reports from the conversations shares evidence to support the issues identified by communities. The report also includes some inspiring examples of programs in action.

Khovrenkov highlighted the top community indicator was “Belonging” and summarized these five key issues which emerged:

- Sustaining rural communities;
- Drug abuse and addiction;
- Safety in communities;
- Racism towards new immigrants and Indigenous peoples; and
- Homelessness and affordable housing.

“There was such diversity in the types of communities that came together for these conversations,” says Ziegler. “Gathering formats ranged from town hall meetings to virtual conversations in ‘real time’.”

The **50 Vital Community Conversations** report underscores the vast complexity to the challenges that exist within and across communities and the need for collaboration at a grassroots level.

“Solutions start with a holistic, innovative and flexible approach focused on achieving results together over the long term,” Ziegler notes.

As next steps, SSCF will use this local knowledge to work collaboratively with others and support actions towards improving the quality of life in southern Saskatchewan together. For a copy of the report, please visit the website at www.sscf.ca

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About the South Saskatchewan Community Foundation: *Founded in 1969, the South Saskatchewan Community Foundation serves as a bridge between donors and charities in Regina and in southern Saskatchewan. We believe in facilitating Saskatchewan philanthropy, supporting local charities, and developing our community so that our home is a more vital, strong, and fair place to live, work, and play. With an endowment pool of just over \$70 million, SSCF supported more than 197 registered charities and granted \$6.5 million in 2018. Learn more by visiting www.sscf.ca*

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