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Alberta Regional Forum  
*Proceedings Report*

# HR Council for the Voluntary & Non-profit Sector

The HR Council for the Voluntary & Non-profit Sector (HR Council) works with organizations, educators, labour and government to identify and address issues related to paid employment in the voluntary and non-profit sector.

Our priorities are to:

- Build and share knowledge
- Promote good HR practices
- Foster training and learning opportunities
- Provide leadership on HR issues
- Engage voluntary and non-profit organizations in our work

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The logo for Canada, featuring the word "Canada" in a serif font with a small Canadian flag above the letter 'a'.

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## Acknowledgements

On June 3, 2009, The HR Council for the Voluntary & Non-profit Sector (HR Council) and the Alberta Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector Workforce Council (Alberta Workforce Council) co-hosted the Alberta Forum in Edmonton. The event was planned and organized by:

- The Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (ECVO)
- The Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO)
- The United Way of the Alberta Capital Region

A big thanks to the individuals who gave their time and expertise as facilitators during the event:

- Russ Dahms, executive director of ECVO was master of ceremonies for the day
- Dal Brodhead provided the overall facilitation
- The workshop table facilitators: Tim Osborne and Alan Undheim from the United Way, Michael Grogan, CCVO and Mandie Abrams, ECVO

A special thanks to Barbara Dart of the United Way of the Alberta Capital Region for coming on board as the financial partner for the forum. We thank those that assisted in the organization and recording of this event:

- Mandie Abrams, ECVO and Christa Broadfoot from the United Way, who did an excellent job of the behind the scenes planning of the event
- Deborah Lawson, assisted by Penelope Hutchison, for preparing the forum's report on proceedings

Above all, we want to thank the participants who attended the forum for providing critical input into Alberta's HR issues for the non-profit sector.

*Russ Dahms*

Forum co-chair  
Executive Director  
Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations

*Joanne Linzey*

Forum co-chair  
Project Manager  
HR Council for the Voluntary & Non-profit Sector

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# Proceedings Report

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## HR Council for the Voluntary & Non-profit Sector *Alberta Regional Forum*

Approximately 40 individuals representing a wide-range of leaders from Alberta's non-profit sector and provincial government gathered in Edmonton for a day of discussion and action planning.

### Foreword

On June 3, 2009, the HR Council and the Alberta Workforce Council hosted a provincial forum to examine labour force issues and opportunities in the non-profit sector. The Alberta Forum was one of five gatherings occurring across the country throughout the Spring of 2009 including St. John's, Moncton, Winnipeg and Vancouver. Each forum generated its own proceedings report. These reports, along with a synthesis report summarizing all the forums, will be available on the HR Council's website.

Approximately 40 individuals representing a wide-range of leaders from Alberta's non-profit sector and provincial government gathered in Edmonton for a day of discussion and action planning. (See Appendices A and B for the day's agenda and a list of participants). The purpose of the day was to:

- Be introduced to the new Alberta Workforce Council
- Gain an understanding of national labour force issues and trends and discuss for the coming HR Council recommendations to the sector
- Identify key workforce issues participants face in their own workplaces
- Identify and prioritize A Workforce Strategy for Alberta's Non-profit and Voluntary Sector activities for the Edmonton area and northern Alberta

This report highlights the discussions which arose during the forum sessions.

## Welcome

Russ Dahms, executive director of the ECVO, opened the day by welcoming the diverse range of participants from all walks of Alberta's non-profit sector. He described the workshop as a chance to "get a toehold" on what is happening in the Edmonton and northern Alberta sector.

Dahms introduced Mandie Abrams, who recently joined as workforce strategy project manager and is applying her skills to assist the new Alberta Workforce Council achieve its objectives. The ECVO has a solid, three-year vision for facilitating work on HR issues with the non-profit sector in Edmonton and northern Alberta. He noted, "It's not about a few people fixing things; it's about us all working together to make things work for us."

Dahm's message was one of new beginnings and new ways of working together. He asked participants to be mindful of things they felt could work in their communities—people they could work with, alliances they could forge—and to see this forum on labour force issues as an opportunity to learn new things that will build our capacity to address the sector's challenges.

Dahms introduced Joanne Linzey, project manager for the HR Council and Dal Brodhead, the facilitator for the event.

This forum and the HR Council's other four provincial forums are part of a national project to raise awareness about human resource issues in the non-profit sector. The forums provide an opportunity to examine issues specific to each province while offering a national lens on labour issues. The Alberta Forum, like the other provincial forums, has been tailored to build on the work taking place within each province. The project's goal is to find ways to work together to address the various HR challenges faced by all non-profit organizations.

In addition to the provincial forums, the HR Council is producing a document that captures and reflects on the process and outcomes of A Workforce Strategy for Alberta's Non-profit and Voluntary Sector. It documents the evolution of the workforce strategy development process and identifies what worked well, what could have been done differently and highlights essential components of a successful outcome.

This initiative will also produce a guide or a roadmap with recommendations to assist non-profit sector organizations in the development of recruitment, training and retention plans. The guide provides case studies and knowledge from collaborative initiatives and offers steps on how to develop a labour force strategy.

Each forum generated its own proceedings report. These reports, along with a synthesis report summarizing all the forums, will be available through the HR Council's web site.

All three resources will be completed by September 2009 and available for download on the HR Council's website.

## The national context

The HR Council was formed through the federal government's Voluntary Sector Initiative. This project is one segment of a three-part Labour Force Study which takes a comprehensive look at paid employment in the sector and has led to the first-ever national labour force strategy.

The first report diagnoses the labour force issues and challenges facing the non-profit sector. The second report is a national survey examining the players in the non-profit sector, from employers to employees. The third report offers recommendations to address the sector's labour force issues. Stakeholders provided input on key challenges, including an aging workforce, leadership issues, cultural diversity, the impact of technology, and the effects of what is the tightest labour market in decades.

A key part of the HR Council's labour force strategy is bringing people together within five provinces to discuss workforce issues. This particular forum focuses on issues in Alberta and is meant to build on the work that is already taking place in this province.

## The national non-profit sector

Joanne Linzey presented an overview of the state of Canada's non-profit sector. There are approximately 69,000 organizations with charitable status in Canada, with 1.2 million paid staff. This represents 7% of gross domestic product (GDP)—more

than the forestry sector. Highlights on employment statistics for Canada's non-profit sector:

- 75% are women
- 43 is the average age
- 71% have post-secondary education
- 1 in 8 have chronic health problems
- 71% are full-time
- 25% have more than one paid job
- 21% are unionized
- 25% have no benefits

Approximately 20% of Canadians are born outside of the country and by 2030 the number of deaths will outnumber births and that means our only growth will come from immigration. The non-profit sector thinks it does a better job than it actually does about being inclusive. A question the sector needs to ask itself is *“How do we attract and keep workers in the sector? How do we embrace diversity of all kinds (including new immigrants and Aboriginal people) particularly in the west?”*

Key challenges facing the non-profit sector include:

- Demographics
- Diversity (new Canadians)
- Demands on the sector
- Recruitment and retention
- Skill and knowledge needs
- Leadership
- Culture

These are important issues for the sector to examine and the sector needs to determine collaboratively how to address some of the challenges. The Moncton area issued a report about why the non-profit sector is critical to the economic health of New Brunswick, showing how Moncton's economic base (e.g. railroad, Eaton's catalogue centre) disappeared 10 years ago. Since then, the non-profit sector has been instrumental to the health of the regional economy, involving:

- The right people, skills, time
- Delivery of services
- The building of a healthy, vibrant, strong, resilient community

*An overview of the Labour Force Study is available on the HR Council's website.*

## The provincial workforce council

Katherine Van Kooy, President and CEO of CCVO provided a brief overview of the Alberta Workforce Council. The council will be the coordinating mechanism by which the non-profit sector will lead the province-wide, cross-sectoral implementation of A Workforce Strategy for Alberta's Non-profit and Voluntary Sector. This ten year labour force development strategy identifies actions to ensure the non-profit sector in Alberta has more workers, better-trained people, and innovative workplaces.

While describing the role of the Alberta Workforce Council, it was noted that the identification of workforce issues and strategies was a good starting point but now the sector must begin to address the issues and create a sustained approach to implementing workforce strategies. The work of the council is being funded by Alberta Employment and Immigration. Van Kooy introduced the members of the Alberta Workforce Council in attendance at the HR Council forum:

- Karen Browning
- Dawna Morley
- Sharlyn White
- Ed Kamps
- Lavonne Roloff
- Russ Dahms
- Barbara Dart
- Linda Thorne
- Rhonda Barraclough
- Mike Grogan
- Mandie Abrams

Van Kooy said that Yvonne Martodam regretted being unable to attend the forum. She also publicly acknowledged the contributions of several who took part in developing the workforce framework:

- Jane Hirst
- Allan Undheim
- Wendy MacDonald
- Eldon Emerson

The Alberta Workforce Council met for the first time on June 2, 2009. To date, an initial terms of reference for the council has been developed, providing a framework for the work ahead. Plans over the next few months include the establishment of the council's foundations and the development of priority action areas. The council is co-chaired by Russ Dahms and Katherine Van Kooy.

## A Workforce Strategy for Alberta's Non-profit and Voluntary Sector

Zarelda Reghelini, Industry Liaison Manager, Alberta Employment and Immigration, gave an overview of how A Workforce Strategy for Alberta's Non-profit and Voluntary Sector came about. During the labour shortage in 2006, the Alberta government approached stakeholder groups about developing a comprehensive labour force strategy. The elements of the strategy included:

- A complementary effort between government and industry including all economic sectors, working on the basis of a sector-led "engagement model" with government in a supporting capacity
- The involvement of five sectors in year one and another four sectors (including the non-profit sector) in year two
- The initiative had to be sector-led

The value of the non-profit sector's economic contribution to Alberta is becoming recognized as a critical piece that needs to be sustained. An important element in the early days of the initiative was the recognition that the nine sectors didn't want a document that just gathered dust on a shelf, stakeholders wanted something that could be implemented and therefore groups had to be willing to be held accountable. Commitment and motivation to undertaking this work was palpable and the non-profit sector was prepared to begin work immediately on the workforce strategy under the leadership of the ECVO and the CCVO. Some important aspects of the initiative included:

- Representation from across the province
- A culture of collaboration and information sharing

- Government acting as the neutral party, to facilitate and to ensure government guidelines are met by all project/initiatives
- A sharing of information, to avoid "re-inventing the wheel"

## Advancing the labour force agenda

With the national and provincial contexts set, participants began the work of reviewing the key themes and sector priority actions identified in A Workforce Strategy for Alberta's Non-profit and Voluntary Sector. The goal was to review the sector priority actions in the strategy to ensure changes in relevancy and depth be given to the environment since the development of the strategy in 2007. (See Appendix C for a complete overview of the key themes and their sub-strategies).

### Four key themes

- Inform
- Attract
- Develop a high performance workforce/work environment
- Retain

### Prioritizing the key themes and priority actions

Participants were provided with five self-adhesive dots and asked to consider their top five priority actions within the workforce strategy. Participants were instructed to place each of their five dots on a different priority action.

The data below shows the top priority actions for each key theme identified by participants through the 'dot-mocracy' exercise.

### Key themes and priority sub-strategies

**Inform:** develop a communication strategy to educate the public on the importance and nature of the work in the sector, such as:

- The importance of the sector to the quality of

life in the community

- The importance of the sector to the economy of the province
- Emphasizing the benefits of working in the sector
- Promoting the sector as an employer of choice
- Targeting under-represented groups such as young people, immigrants, the semi-retired and men

**Attract:** Assemble and distribute good management practice tools to help non-profit sector employers attract workers.

**Develop a high performance workforce:** Foster development and strengthen human resource management practices by:

- Creating forums for sharing human resource ideas and best practices
- Supporting initiatives that can assist non-profit organizations in assessing the effectiveness of their human resource practices and take the necessary steps to address deficiencies
- Facilitating supervisory and management workshops

**Develop a high performance work environment:** Advocate with government and other funders for funding levels that:

- Allow for fair compensation (through both wages and benefits) of employees in the non-profit sector
- Allow for long-term planning and job security
- Support organizational sustainability

**Retain:** Identify and encourage the application of effective strategies to help employers improve the retention of youth and middle-management positions.

## Issue identification

Following this exercise, participants self-selected to join one of four groups structured around the four theme areas of the workforce strategy. Within each

group, discussion focused on the sector priority actions identified in the dot exercise as being of top concern for participants.

The groups were asked to consider the following four questions:

- What is the desired outcome three years from now
- What changes in Edmonton in the past 18 months have had an impact on the outcome
- What current initiatives or activities support or complement the goal
- What is standing in the way of achieving the desired outcome

Lively discussion amongst the groups ensued as participants offered innovative ideas and raised new questions about the most effective way to address particular HR challenges and opportunities facing the non-profit sector. As forum participants reconvened, each group chose a spokesperson to report back on their discussion, highlighting for their issue the desired state, local changes impacting the outcome of a specific sub-strategy, current initiatives supporting the goal and potential barriers to realizing the action.

## Theme 1: inform

Develop a communication strategy to educate the public on the importance and nature of the work in the sector, such as:

- The importance of the sector to the quality of life in the community
- The importance of the sector to the economy of the province
- Emphasizing the benefits of working in the sector
- Promoting the sector as an employer of choice
- Targeting under-represented groups such as young people, immigrants, the semi-retired and men

## Desired state

- Sense of community ownership (different generations, newcomers to community)

- Sector becomes normalized as part of the community
- Grown in stature; become a part of what we do
- People can articulate the sector's value
- Sector has more activity in different parts of the community (planning tables, election issues, on agenda of political parties)

### Changes impacting the outcome

- Economic downturn may be creating opportunity to profile the sector to raise awareness
- Different advocacy campaigns
- Stress on working more collaboratively
- Funding cuts may limit ability of organizations to pursue funding campaigns
- Organizations and individuals become more internally focused; not thinking about greater good
- Increased competition (may be a good thing, i.e., mergers, collaboration)
- Vacancies, turnovers, burnouts
- Educating the public (e.g., various campaigns, social return on investment, FSCC growth strategy)
- Not on anyone's agenda; not a priority
- Lack of resources
- Lack of strategic focus
- Increased challenge of getting out the message to the public

### Theme 2: Attract

Assemble and distribute good management practice tools to help non-profit sector employers attract workers.

#### Desired state

- Sector would be seen as an employer of choice
- See greater diversity

### Changes impacting the outcome

- Changes in environment (e.g., more workers available)

- Loss of some workers (e.g., returning home)
- Need to take advantage of increased social consciousness
- Hiring freezes
- Decreases in training dollars
- Changes in funding models (e.g., moving to year-to-year)
- Program cuts

### Current initiatives supporting the goal

- Post-secondary community service education
- STEP funding
- HRVS resources for the voluntary sector
- Corporate partnerships
- Young Canada
- Web-based options

### Barriers to achieving desired outcomes

- Lack of comparable wages
- Lack of coordination between agencies
- Capacity within organizations (e.g., small organizations)
- Lack of awareness of existing resources
- Mindset of making this a priority
- Tension between how we promote ourselves versus the reality

### Theme 3: Develop a high performance workforce

Foster development and strengthen human resource management practices by:

- Creating forums for sharing human resource ideas and best practices
- Supporting initiatives that can assist non-profit organizations in assessing the effectiveness of their human resource practices and take the necessary steps to address deficiencies
- Facilitating management workshops

#### Desired state

- Professionalism, credibility
- Attract returning moms and others looking

for flexible work arrangements

- Increase in this type of referrals
- Unsolicited resumes

#### **Changes impacting the outcome**

- Changes in environment
- Delayed retirements
- Layoffs
- Need for two incomes in families
- More people making career changes
- Increase in minimum wage

#### **Current initiatives supporting the goal**

- Government support
- Volunteering
- Targeted marketing
- Online training around disability services, child care work, etc.
- Bursaries, government grants

#### **Barriers to achieving desired outcomes**

- EDs need more time to focus on leadership aspects of the organization; strategic thinking versus supervision role
- Board volunteering
- Intergenerational issues
- Spend more time looking at the problems than celebrating successes
- Need to understand social networking/social marketing tools as a way of reaching out to people

### **Theme 3 (part 2): Develop a high performance work environment**

Advocate with government and other funders for funding levels that:

- Allow for fair compensation (through both wages and benefits) of employees in the non-profit sector
- Allow for long-term planning and job security
- Support organizational sustainability

#### **Desired state**

- Core, long-term funding/fair compensation comparable to the public sector
- Benefit packages that meet the needs and can be inclusive of small organizations
- Retirement packages
- Funding focused on sustaining organizations not on political priorities
- Acknowledge and respect that sector is an expert

#### **Changes impacting the outcome**

- Price of oil and gas has changed
- Economic downturn
- Change in government
- Increase in client services
- Less funding; funding levels frozen
- Matching grant issues
- \$9 million lost to sector with closing of Wild Rose Foundation
- Decreases across the board
- Increases in operational costs
- Decrease in revenues
- Infrastructures beginning to fail
- Increased quality for recruitment but increased anxiety about whether they will stay
- High turnover/cost of recruitment
- Secondary income has become primary income
- Employees in sector needing to have second job

#### **Current initiatives supporting the goal**

- Different government levels are funding together instead of separately
- FCSS, United Way and Region 6 working to streamline funding, evaluation, reporting requirements
- AASCF, AB ASS
- Federal Blue Ribbon Panel streamlining reporting requirements
- AB Health making statements they support

### **Barriers to achieving desired outcomes**

- Expectation that one size fits all
- Competition for resources within the sector
- Funders restructuring and shifting priorities
- Competition stands in the way of collaboration and joint initiatives
- Creates organizational culture of balancing benefits
- Stuck in survivor mode due to lack of resources, capacity
- Clientele is not one size fits all
- Reaction to changes in government funding given more weight than NGO sector
- Expectation that non-profit sector can take on quality of market economy model
- Not enough consultation by government with groups they are impacting
- Government off-loading
- Pilot projects, seed money, then discussion about whose responsibility it is to be catalyst of change and who to fund
- Expectation by clients that organization is an arm of government and that the service will always be there
- Lack of capacity within organization (e.g., cannot keep up)
- Diversity created by government greater opportunities for collaboration but funders/criteria may limit collaboration
- Mission drift

### **Theme 4: Retain**

Identify and encourage the application of effective strategies to help employers improve the retention of youth and middle-management positions.

#### **Desired state**

- Full complement of well-paid, appropriately paid, intergenerational staff
- People seeing a future not just a stepping-stone within the sector
- Increased partnership

- Existing management would be aware of what young people want in position and would make the organization comfortable for them

### **Changes impacting the outcome**

- More competition for employment; more people in workforce
- Government restructuring created more availability of middle management personnel
- Competition for funding within the sector (finite dollars available)
- Greater selection (doesn't necessarily mean greater quality applicants)
- Economic impact on leadership transitions
- Opportunity to access more highly-skilled employees who are staying in the workforce longer; looking for something that has meaning rather than just for a reprieve

### **Current initiatives supporting the goal**

- Workshops about what the new generation wants (e.g., how to be more open, accommodating and attractive to young people)
- Shared services (e.g., providing capacity for organizations to be able to address HR issues; time to create environments they want to create)

### **Barriers to achieving desired outcomes**

- Management/leadership comfort with prevailing attitudes toward young people coming up in the workforce
- Time to create framework that's attractive to new person; mentor
- Maternity leaves present a challenge to organizations; need to be flexible
- Perception that sector is either not a desirable career option or is only a stepping stone to something better
- Intergenerational gaps in understanding in general
- Funding and resource issues, specifically around youth

- Timing of government subsidies (STEP and graduation aren't necessarily in alignment)
- Inter-sectoral communication/sharing, resources are finite so it increases competition within the sector

## Planning for action

In order to move forward on the priority actions, each participant was asked to identify a key theme of most interest to their organization. Once again working in small groups participants engaged in an in-depth debate as they discussed what steps must be taken and who is available to help collectively move the priority actions identified in the dot exercise forward.

For each priority action discussed participants were asked to:

- Identify concrete steps (for the next 6 months) that could advance the work for each priority action that is discussed
- Identify potential partners/organizations
- Discuss the role their individual organization might be prepared to undertake

### Theme 1: Inform

Develop a communication strategy to educate the public on the importance and nature of the work in the sector, such as:

- The importance of the sector to the quality of life in the community
- The importance of the sector to the economy of the province
- Emphasizing the benefits of working in the sector
- Promoting the sector as an employer of choice
- Targeting under-represented groups such as young people, immigrants, the semi-retired and men

#### Concrete steps

- Can we do some research
- Check into new media
- Alberta Workforce Council not to do this work, but to facilitate getting it done

#### Potential partners

- United Way
- Government of Alberta

#### Organizational roles

- Two ways to do this: global strategy or micro-strategies
- Join groups that have sector-building as part of their mandate

### Theme 2: Attract

Assemble and distribute good management practice tools to help non-profit sector employers attract workers.

#### Concrete steps

- Research and better understanding of the issue
- Research what's already out there, what already exists
- Get feedback from sector about current experiences; make sure we're giving people what they really want
- Non-profit job bank (where do people go when they want to work in the sector)
- Identify/develop funding plan

#### Potential partners

- Alberta Workforce Council
- Government of Alberta (expertise in websites)
- Volunteer AB
- Government bodies—AEI/CCSI/Advanced Education/Culture and Community Spirit
- Post-secondary institutions (career/placement services)
- Employment agencies
- Professional associations

#### Organizational roles

- Share expertise

### Theme 3: Develop a high performance workforce/ work environment

Advocate with government and other funders for funding levels that:

- Allow for fair compensation (through both wages and benefits) of employees in the non-profit sector
- Allow for long-term planning and job security
- Support organizational sustainability

#### Concrete steps

- Develop a communication plan to be taken to elected officials (MLAs, MPs)
- Get strategy into the work plans of provincial organizations/agencies (for bi- or tri-level organizations)
- All agencies need to communicate “the same case”
- Make sure elected representatives know, “the volunteer sector helps YOU meet the needs of your constituents”
- Give mandate to the Alberta Workforce Council (or somebody) to advocate/speak to the issue on behalf of everybody
- Find a political consultant to help plan presentation of the strategy. This is about how to have an impact in influencing politicians
- Talk to organizations in other provinces to see how they’ve dealt with these issues
- Find out whether provincial Chambers of Commerce are aware of the strategy; consult with them about how to inform their members (members to plan how to approach)
- Explore/research benefit plans with benefit consultants

#### Potential partners

- Link into network of provincial networks

#### Organizational roles

- Nancy McCalder (the support network) will start a conversation around exploring benefits

- Ione Challborn (Cdn. Mental Health Association, Edmonton region) will explore hiring a political consultant and will go to her provincial organization
- Maureen Collins (Edmonton John Howard Society, same as above)
- Mandie Abrams (EVCO) will contact Alberta Disability Forum (Bev Matthiessen), also EVCO, CCVO, United Way Calgary

### Theme 4: Retain

Identify and encourage the application of effective strategies to help employers improve the retention of youth and middle-management positions.

#### Concrete steps

- Communicate to the sector
- Define ‘youth’
- Come to an understanding of who youth are and the importance of understanding what youth wants
- Access research that has been done and solicit direct feedback from youth who are working in the sector
- Use exit interviews or ask people why they stay
- Connecting middle managers (e.g. via a forum, or virtually)

#### Potential partners

- United Way
- Intervivos
- Next generation
- Youth organizations
- Umbrella organizations
- Alberta Workforce Council (committee)

## Toward a national labour force strategy

Joanne Linzey presented findings from the HR Council's final report of the Labour Force Study. The report contains five recommendations for the non-profit sector. The recommendations are the result of significant consultation by the Labour Force Study Steering Committee, and many of these recommendations were raised by participants during the day's discussion.

The HR Council is a key source of information, tools and research for the non-profit sector in the area of HR. It can assist organizations in navigating their labour force issues.

### HR Council's five recommendations

- A deliberate, purposeful focus on doing a better job of HR management
- Intentional efforts to continue building an inclusive workforce
- A research and development strategy that produces empirical evidence that is useful and used by the sector
- Broadly-based coordinated efforts to promote the value of work in the sector
- Organizations and funders commit to supporting competitive compensation, good working conditions and effective HR management

## Next Steps

Mandie Abrams closed the forum by thanking participants for their input and hard work in addressing some of the complex and critical labour force issues facing Alberta's non-profit sector. She said collaboration was the resounding theme of the day. Noting that the non-profit community need to find ways to work together that make sense for individual organization's needs now and in the future.

Abrams asked participants to be vocal cheerleaders for the sector and for the workforce initiatives underway in Alberta. Ideally, by getting the word

out, action will follow. She said this strategy is meant to benefit the people we serve, and will help support better, stronger and more effective non-profit organizations.

Russ Dahms noted that the work generated by participants during the forum was significant and that the consequences of this meeting will benefit people throughout the province. Over the course of the next three years, some priority actions will be accomplished and others will have just begun. He projected that some of the work could take a decade to complete but Dahms encouraged participants to be relentless in their pursuit of change within the sector. He said the transformations we are trying to make will benefit generations to come.

With work from the Alberta Workforce Council underway, Dahms called it a brand new launch. "Communication and relationships are what our business is all about," he said. He called on participants to reach out to their networks, noting the Alberta Workforce Council will be developing a plan to help facilitate this. "We face many challenges in terms of a sector that's huge in both its scope and its geography," he said. "This is not without challenges. It will evolve as you help it evolve but there is no doubt in my mind that collectively we possess the skill and expertise to address these challenges and the good will to work together to do so."

# Appendix A:

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## *Alberta Regional Forum Agenda*

HR Forum, Edmonton  
June 3, 2009  
AGENDA

Outcomes:

The participants will:

1. Be introduced to the new Alberta Nonprofit/Voluntary Sector Workforce Council
2. Gain an understanding of national labour force issues and trends and discuss forthcoming HR Council recommendations to the sector.
3. Identify key workforce issues they face in their own workplaces
4. Identify and prioritize Alberta NP/V Sector Workforce Strategy actions and activities for Edmonton Area and Northern Alberta

<b>9:00 – 9:20</b>	<b>Introductions &amp; Overview of Agenda</b>
<b>9:20 – 10:00</b>	<b>The Context: National Survey</b>
<b>10:00 – 10:30</b>	<b>Alberta Context and Overview</b>
<b>10:30 – 10:45</b>	<b>Coffee</b>
<b>10:45 – 11:00</b>	<b>Building on strengths: Advancing the labour force agenda for the sector</b>
<b>11:00- 12:00</b>	<b>Charting the Course</b>
<b>12:15-1:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>1:00</b>	<b>Working collaboratively</b>
<b>1:15- 1:45</b>	<b>Planning for Action</b>
<b>1:45- 2:15</b>	<b>Debrief the groups in plenary</b>
<b>2:25 – 2:40</b>	<b>Toward a Labour Force Strategy for Canada’s Voluntary/Non-profit Sector</b>

# Appendix B

## *Alberta Forum Participants*

Name	Title	Organization
Mandie Abrams	Workforce Strategy Program Manager	Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
Rhonda Barraclough	Executive Director	Alberta Association of Services for Children and Families
Kris Bojda	Business & Industry Liason	Alberta Employment and Immigration
Karen Browning	Director of Finance and Administration	Canadian Mental Health, Calgary
Glen Carroll	Business & Industry Supervisor	Alberta Employment and Immigration
Ione Challborn	Executive Director	Canadian Mental Health Association Edmonton
Linda Cherry	Child Support Worker	Alberta Employment and Immigration
Catherine Cole	Heritage Consultant	Catherine C. Cole & Associates
Mary Collier	Outreach Manager	Alberta Museums Association
Maureen Collins	Executive Director	Edmonton John Howard Society
Pat Conrad	Executive Director	Skills Society
Russ Dahms	Executive Director	Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
Barbara Dart	VP Community Building and Investment	United Way of the Alberta Capital Region
Eldon Emerson	Manager, Human Resources Initiatives	The Muttart Foundation
Trevor Esau	Labour Market Partnership Coordinator	Alberta Employment and Immigration
Helen Ficocelli	Executive Director	Coolaid Society
Sara Florez	Client Support Worker	Wood Buffalo HIV& AIDS Society
Garry Gairdner	Aboriginal Relations Consultant	Canadian Native Friendship Centre
Claire Gallant	Program Manager - Family Supports	Connect Society

Mike Grogan	Project Manager	Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
Lynda Harker	Director, Volunteer Services	Cross Cancer Institute
Jane Hirst	Director of Community Engagement & Education	Bissell Centre
Ed Kamps	Project Manager	United Way of Fort McMurray
Ash Kassam	HR Consultant	CNIB
Tara Kormish	Financial Comptroller	Bonnyville Native Friendship Centre
Walter Lidster	Executive Director	Family Services of Central Alberta
Joanne Linzey	Project Manager	HR Council For the Voluntary and Nonprofit Sector
Ada Lovmo		The Community Village
Wendy MacDonald	Curriculum Coordinator	Grant MacEwan College
Linda Maxwell	Executive Director	Accredited Supports to the Community
Nancy McCaldar	Executive Director	The Support Network
Sandi Misselbrook	Manager of Community Services	St. John Ambulance, Alberta Council
Dawna Morley	Executive Director	Community Information and Referral Society
Ann Nicol	CEO	Alberta Council of Disability Services
Tim Osborne	Director School and Neighbourhood Initiatives	United Way of the Alberta Capital Region
Josephine Pallard	Executive Director	Changing Together
Bev Parks	Executive Director	Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre
Sheilah Pittman	Community Investment Specialist	United Way of the Alberta Capital Region
Zarelda Reghelini	Industry Liaison Manager	Alberta Employment and Immigration
Lavonne Roloff	Provincial Director	Alberta Home Visitation Network Association
Linda Thorne	Executive Director	Community Learning Network
Allan Undheim	Director, Community Building and Investment	United Way of the Alberta Capital Region
Claudette Vague	Adviser	Girl Guides

Katherine van Kooy	CEO	Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
Sharlyn White	Executive Director	Family & Community Support Services Association of Alberta
Irene Wood	Manager of Human Resources	YMCA of Edmonton

# Appendix C

## Four Key Themes

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### Inform

Information sharing will play a vital role in addressing labour force pressures in Alberta's non-profit sector. The inform theme focuses on increased access to information to support informed decision-making on the part of employers, workers, youth entering the workforce and individuals considering employment in this sector.

1.1 Develop a strategy to educate all levels of government about:

- the importance of the sector to the quality of life in the community
- the importance of the sector to the economy of the province
- the challenges the sector faces with the labour force shortfall.

1.2 Advocate to governments for:

- the need for departments to establish common policies, procedures, and a standard format for granting and funding proposals
- a partnership to gather updated data relating to all aspects of the non-profit sector (i.e., comprehensive salary data, benefit coverage, employment statistics)

1.3 Develop a communication strategy to educate the public on the importance and nature of the work in the sector:

- the importance of the sector to the quality of life in the community
- the importance of the sector to the economy of the province
- emphasize the benefits of working in the sector
- promote the sector as an employer of choice

- target under-represented groups such as young people, immigrants, the semi-retired and men

1.4 Educate businesses and industry about the importance of the sector to the economy and quality of life in the community.

1.5 Work with post-secondary institutions to:

- seek opportunities to make presentations at colleges and universities about careers in the non-profit sector
- ensure the non-profit sector is included in job fairs, etc

1.6 Work with secondary schools to:

- promote student placements in non-profit organizations
- inform students of the non-profit sector as a career choice

1.7 Inform employers in the non-profit sector about resources that are available, actions that are being taken within the sector and good management practice tools for employers (i.e. sector symposia, forums, conferences, website links and studies)

### Attract

This theme relates to attracting workers to the non-profit sector from Alberta, as well as from outside Alberta and Canada.

2.1 Provide expertise to support local, regional and provincial marketing campaigns that would include:

- making candidates aware of the advantages of working in the sector and having meaningful work
- promoting the opportunity for flexible work

hours and flexible working arrangements

2.2 Improve the ability of employers to promote and advertise employment opportunities and for job seekers to be able to learn about and apply for available jobs

2.3 Assemble and distribute good management practice tools to help non-profit sector employers attract workers

2.4 Promote the non-profit sector as an employer of choice to return-to-work or career change programs that look to place and support employees moving from different sectors of employment

2.5 Partner with industry sectors (i.e., oil and gas, construction, manufacturing, retail) on recruitment campaigns for attracting workers to Alberta. Promote opportunities for other family members to earn supplemental income or start careers in the non-profit sector

## Develop a high performance workforce

The develop theme has two components. The first focuses on building Alberta's non-profit sector through education and training.

3.1 Increase collaboration between the non-profit sector and educational institutions to meet the current and emerging needs of the sector by:

- developing educational and workplace-based training programs
- developing professional certification and accreditation specific to non-profit roles
- promoting co-op work terms in the non-profit sector

3.2 Foster development and strengthen human resource management practices by:

- creating forums for sharing human resource ideas and best practices
- supporting initiatives that can assist non-profit organizations in assessing the

effectiveness of their human resource practices and take the necessary steps to address deficiencies

- facilitating supervisory and management workshops

3.3 Work with government and business on strategies to promote the sharing of personnel resources, and training and professional development (i.e. mentorship programs, paid internships) with the non-profit sector

3.4 Advocate with government and business for the availability of scholarships, bursaries and ongoing funding to support board, staff and volunteer training and development

## Develop a high performance work environment

The second component focuses on the work environment and includes improving workplaces and work arrangements, increasing capital investment and technology adoption, and improving business processes.

3.5 Assess the present service delivery models and adapt them to reflect the changing economic, political and social environment

3.6 Develop a model to deliver a coordinated effort throughout the province for implementing the workforce strategy

3.7 Research, identify and promote potential opportunities for career mobility across organizations within the sector (i.e. portable benefits, employee sharing consortia)

3.8 Advocate with government and other funders for funding levels that:

- allow for fair compensation (through both wages and benefits) of employees in the non-profit sector
- allow for long-term planning and job security
- support organizational sustainability

3.9 Promote the application of strategic organizational planning to make non-profits sustainable

3.10 Develop and implement comprehensive volunteer management practices, including board recruitment and training

3.11 Advocate industry to increase and strengthen corporate employee volunteer programs

3.12 Facilitate the development of local or regional resource networks that would enable non-profits to share the cost and use of human resources or centralized services

## Retain

The retain theme relates to enhancing the attractiveness of working in Alberta's non-profit sector so that workers – including mature workers, immigrants, Aboriginals and those who may experience difficulty maintaining employment – remain engaged in the sector.

4.1 Identify and encourage the application of effective strategies to help employers improve the retention of youth and middle-management positions

4.2 Identify, develop and distribute effective practices and tools to help employers retain a diverse labour force.

4.3 Develop a guide of resources and best management practices that will enhance the ability of employers to retain those working within the sector

4.4 Work with other industry sectors to provide the necessary support for new workers to the province and to advocate for funding from these industry sectors to deliver these services

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