

# A YEAR OF IMPACT

United Way  
2017 YEAR IN  
REVIEW



**United Way**  
**Greater Victoria**



# THANK YOU FOR CARING

We are proud to work with our donors, our volunteer Board of Directors, and Community Cabinet who provide the support, leadership and commitment to serve the needs of our citizens. United, we are addressing critical social issues in our community. We couldn't do this without you.





## YOUR DONATION HAS AN IMPACT

Remember how good it felt when you donated? We want to take you back in time to evoke what motivated you to give to United Way, and to show you what your support has accomplished.

**Your generosity means that thousands of lives were changed for the better last year.**

Together, you helped fund 89 local programs. Thanks to you, United Way is able to allocate multi-year funding to our community partners which provides them with stability to focus on vital program delivery. As a result, a strong and proactive network of services is available to people when and where they need it most.

### Did you know?

We have over 500 campaign volunteers annually.

## YOUR COLLECTIVE DONATIONS WERE INVESTED ACROSS UNITED WAY'S THREE COMMUNITY PRIORITY AREAS.

# 29

PROGRAMS

**ALL THAT KIDS CAN BE:** With 16% of children in Victoria living in poverty, and 1 in 4 children considered developmentally vulnerable, stability and positive role models are essential to succeeding in school.

United Way funded 29 programs to provide children and youth with the resources and mentoring they need to grow up healthy, thrive in school, and transition into strong adults.

# 17

PROGRAMS

**FROM POVERTY TO POSSIBILITY:** The wage required to maintain an adequate quality of life is calculated at \$20.01 per hour – almost \$9 above the current minimum wage of \$11.35 an hour. With 47% of Victoria renters spending more than 30% of their income on rent, the need for self-sufficiency skills is high.

United Way funded 17 programs to help people living in poverty become more independent through access to healthy food, affordable housing, and sustainable employment.

# 43

PROGRAMS

**STRONG COMMUNITIES:** 1 in 4 people on Vancouver Island have mental health challenges that compromise their lifestyles and well-being, often leading to social isolation.

United Way funded 43 programs to build the overall health and well-being of our community by creating opportunities for community connection, belonging and inclusiveness.



# 2017: HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR SUCCESS

Last year, we celebrated 80 years of helping our community – that’s 80 years of success stories.

Here are a few of our achievements made possible last year thanks to donors like you:

We did it! Last year, **bc211** was brought to Vancouver Island. bc211 is a free, confidential telephone, texting and online referral service available 24/7 in over 160 languages. Already, 6,525 islanders have been helped by bc211.



Being homeless is challenging any time of year but as the cold, wet weather sets in, it’s especially difficult. In November, United Way provided additional funding to bc211 to create a **Shelter and Street Helpline** to assist people find a warm place to stay on any given night. Updated twice a day, the helpline provides real-time information on bed and mat availability, meaning that frontline shelter staff and frontline responders like police officers, can also help place those in need with temporary shelter.



In response to the devastating wildfires last summer, \$170,000 was raised for the **United for BC Wildfire Recovery** campaign. Funds raised will work to help rebuild the strength and resiliency of the communities affected by the BC wildfires.

As we age, social connections are vitally important to our health. Your donations helped James Bay New Horizons and Silver Threads Service – two of the largest senior service agencies in the CRD – expand their **Seniors Outreach Program**.



We met with our funded partners and other non-profit organizations to help us understand current and emerging needs and challenges in our region. This community consultation process gave us valuable input to inform our community investment strategy. Read about what we heard and how we are helping in our **Connecting with Community: Moving Forward Together** report available at [uwgv.ca/reports](http://uwgv.ca/reports).

United Way provided special funding to the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria to launch **Google Translate**. The free app works like a digital interpreter allowing two people who speak different languages to communicate through a smartphone or tablet.







# Respite: A night away for caregivers of children with special needs

## DOING GOOD DOES YOU GOOD

When we help others, it helps improve our own mental and physical health, lowering stress levels and increasing happiness. The feeling you get when you help others is felt tenfold by the recipients. Here are two stories about the ripple effects of your generosity.

**When Ann Auld gave birth to a baby girl with Down syndrome, the doctor called her “perfect.”** Ann and her spouse, Martin, named her Zola, meaning, “of the earth.” Knowing her daughter’s condition, Ann vowed, “I will bring her out into the world and I will bring the world to her.”

When Zola’s father Martin was killed in a motorcycle hit-and-run eight years ago, the loss was catastrophic. Ann not only lost her co-parent, but two full-time jobs, and nearly their home. Her tutoring service is now the primary source of income, allowing the time to manage Zola’s care including choosing clothing for the day, administering her medication, and managing appointments and activities.

The emotional and financial stress has been exhausting. Ann is constantly worried about and preparing for Zola’s future. “Those of us in chronic caregiving mode are compared to combat soldiers – we never get to switch off.”

With funding support from United Way donors, Ann can have a “night away” compliments of a local hotel, as part of the Cridge Respite Service program. The program helps to break the pattern of isolation felt by caretaker families while allowing donors to touch the lives of people they might not otherwise meet.

Charismatic Zola is a social magnet. “She’s fun, inventive, and people want to be around her. She is a spokesperson for those who literally cannot speak.” And Zola did just that when she was chosen to greet the Duchess of Cambridge during the Royal Tour to Victoria in 2016!

**Special thanks** to our outstanding media partners who donated close to \$1 Million in services in-kind.



**On the Saanich Peninsula's ŁÁU, WELNEW Tribal School grounds, a special program grows – the PEPÁKEN HÁUTW nursery. Here, 28-year-old instructor, PEPÁKIYE Ashley Cooper, shares her native plant knowledge with children in grades 1 through 10.**

Ashley's cultural education has been hard won. She is WŚÁNEĆ (Saanich) from the WJOLELP and Mowachat First Nations and is part of the first generation of her family not forced into residential schools. Pressured to deny her cultural identity, Ashley experienced an anxiety disorder as an early teen, dropped out of school, turned to drugs, and to escape the violence at home began sleeping in shelters and the streets. With the help of a therapist, Ashley fell in love with identifying native plants and she used her

interest as a grounding strategy when she felt anxious. Curious about the healing properties of plants, she also wanted to learn their SENĆOŦEN names.

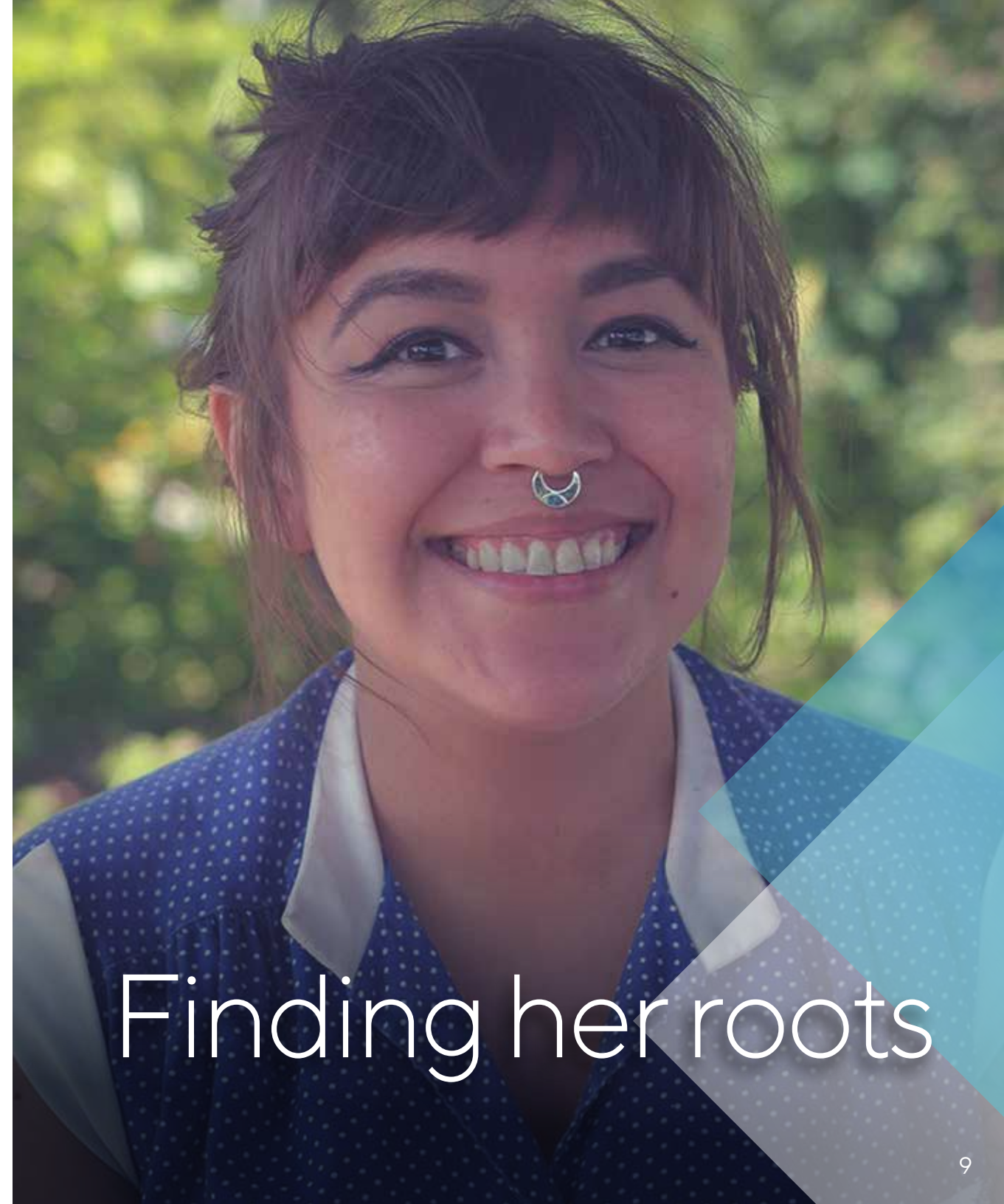
"Only 0.2 percent of the WŚÁNEĆ (Saanich) Nation speak SENĆOŦEN," according to Ashley. She was finishing the University of Victoria's W,SENĆOŦEN,IST diploma program when she was asked to be a PEPÁKEN HÁUTW nursery program workshop leader. Since 2011, the nursery has provided native plants to restoration sites in culturally significant places within the WŚÁNEĆ territory. The nursery also runs programs teaching children how to identify, grow, and care for native plants including ones that can be used as medicines.

Teaching children how to identify plant medicines has given Ashley a new sense of purpose. "Some of our children are living in poverty and can't afford medicines, so to know I can teach them how to harvest IESIP from a maple tree to heal their sore throat makes everything I've gone through worthwhile."

"I'm the first generation to speak my language again, and a word I like to teach the children is 'JIJEŁ SEN' (I am grateful). I raise my hands to United Way and their donors for helping to make our cultural dreams come true."

#### Did you know?

UVic, Island Health and BC Transit loaned us 3 employees to help us as Campaign Associates with our annual community campaign.



# Finding her roots





# THANKS FROM OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

**Special thanks** to our community partner presenters who share their stories of hope and resilience.



Much of the work that we do is emotional, intimate, and challenging. It exists at the core of who we are. It requires a network of community workers, fundraisers, donors, and the people we support to enact change. Thank you for supporting our organization.”

**- Nick Sandor**  
*Island Sexual Health Society*



The Feeding Ourselves and Others Community Garden is an innovative and effective project that provides a healthy safe place, where people can learn new skills, learn to work cooperatively with others, and feel pride in their efforts. This program is possible because of you.”

**- Dave Johnson**  
*John Howard Society, Serenity Farm Garden*





One of the pillars of the Oasis program is facilitating reconnection to family and the delicate work of rebuilding relationships. Thanks to you, people have the opportunity to change their path and make new choices. We are grateful for your generosity.”

**- Kathryn Lacerte**

*Oasis Society for the Spiritual Health of Victoria*



We see lives changed every day! When people come to us, they are often discouraged, broken and very vulnerable. As we have the chance to work with them, we see them begin to hope and to believe that they have a good and healthy future ahead of them. So from the heart of The Cridge, thank you for your support and love for our families. You are a blessing to us!”

**- Joanne Specht**

*The Cridge Centre for the Family*

#### Did you know?

Last year we collaborated with new partners: The Bay Centre, Royal BC Museum, Brink Events, Baggins Shoes and Victoria Film Festival.



#### Did you know?

We celebrated 30 years of being “stronger together” through our partnership with the Canadian Labour Congress and the Victoria Labour Council.



# LOOKING AHEAD

You are part of a collective of hard-working individuals who are passionate about giving, advocating, and volunteering to build a stronger, more resilient community. You are supporting a network of services that helps people regain hope and a sense of purpose as they build their skills and independence, and strengthen their connections and well-being.

We want to stay connected with you.

To learn more about our funding priority areas and the issues we are addressing in our community, and to read or watch more success stories please visit our website at [uwgv.ca](http://uwgv.ca). Here, you will also find our online Donor Wall, which recognizes donors who give at the Community Hero to Philanthropist Circle levels and the recently-launched Legacy Giving Circle for donors with a committed bequest, life insurance or charitable trust gift to United Way.

## Questions?

Contact Laura Milligan  
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Photo credit: Ann & Zola courtesy of elighphoto.com





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