

The Burning Bush

Troy Davies, Chief Executive Officer



Earlier this week, on January 24, the Church celebrated the Feast Day of St. Francis de Sales, known as “the Gentleman Saint” for his patience and kindness.

I have been inspired by his example and legacy in recent weeks, as I think about how, like St. Francis, we will all need to tap even further into our reserves of patience and kindness as we move through 2021.

At the beginning of the pandemic, feelings of fear and anxiety predominated. Those feelings are natural and still exist many months later. After nearly a year of living with COVID-19, however, the dominant mood seems to have shifted from fear to fatigue and frustration. We are tired. We want this challenging time in human history to end, and we want to find some sense of normalcy again - whatever that may look like in a post-pandemic world.

Even as we struggle with exhaustion, we must always remember that we are a people of hope. In fact, “hope” is what our Agency is all about.

Here too, St. Francis provides a useful reminder. He once said, “Do not look forward in fear to the changes in life; rather look to them with full hope as they arise. God, whose very own you are, will lead you safely through all things, and when you cannot stand it, he will carry you in his arms.”

2020 was a year that challenged us and changed us, just as 2021 likely will. But there are many valuable lessons in this struggle. We’re being taught, in a brand new way, the extraordinary importance and value of human connection. And, despite the tough times, we’re also witnessing remarkable acts of kindness and generosity.

It is in our darkest hour that hope shines brightest. I encourage all of you to look for the “light” in your lives, and to allow it to lift you up and keep you going, especially when you feel the exhaustion creep in.

This will not last forever. In fact, with vaccinations underway an end is in sight. Let us remember the example of St. Francis, and continue to live with patience and kindness in these coming months, so that we can all find the light at the end of this dark tunnel together.

Grateful for each of you,

Troy

SAVE THE DATE

Mission Recognition Awards

Friday, April 23, 2021
12:00 p.m.

Virtual – *keep your eyes
on the Portal for details!*



Table of Contents

PAGE 1	The Burning Bush Your Benefits Refund Save the Date: Mission Awards
PAGE 2	CSS Spotlight - LARCC CSS in the News Sign of Hope Triumphs!
PAGE 3	I.T. Moment Passing of Fr. Mike McCaffery Faith's Offering - Words to Feed your Soul Welcome Trevor Mireau, our new Chief Financial Officer
PAGE 4	Stories from the Frontlines SWELL Christmas at CSS Re-charge your Batteries Board Bulletin
PAGE 5	2021 Payroll At-A-Glance Calendar

Your benefits refund

At CSS all full-time, and many part-time, staff participate in our cost-shared benefits plan. This year, due to COVID-19 restrictions, many healthcare practitioners had to close their doors, and services were unavailable.

Because of this, overall expenditures from the Agency benefits pool were reduced, and there is a small surplus which was shared with all employees in the benefits plan through a cash refund on the January 25 pay cheque. Visit [the Portal](#) for more information about your refund!



CSS SPOTLIGHT - LARCC

Language Assessment, Referral, and Counselling Centre

Immigration & Settlement Service

We hear it all the time – “CSS does so much, I don’t even know half the programs we have!” And so each quarter, we will spotlight one of our programs and share some of the incredible work you are doing across the agency.

Here’s what Margaryta Marion, Program Manager, had to say about our LARCC program.

FOR STAFF WHO AREN’T FAMILIAR, WHAT IS OUR LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT, REFERRAL, AND COUNSELLING CENTRE (LARCC)?

LARCC offers a myriad of services geared towards enhancing newcomers’ settlement and integration outcomes. We’re a partnership of two CSS programs: the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Assessment Program and the Language and Vocational Assessment (LVA) and Counselling Program.

WHAT PROGRAMMING OR SERVICES DO YOU PROVIDE FOR NEWCOMERS?

We offer English language/literacy assessments and French proctoring based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB), after-test counselling and referral for further support, educational counselling, information sessions on a variety of topics of interest to newcomers, CLB 1-on-1 tutoring, and follow-up to ensure our newcomers feel supported throughout their settlement journey.

WHAT WAYS HAVE YOU HAD TO ADAPT THROUGHOUT COVID-19?

Protecting people we serve and staff while managing and meeting service expectations remained essential for LARCC during the pandemic. There were many shifts we had to make, including transitioning staff to remote work wherever possible, finding ways to shift our programming and supports online, and we even launched a new service, CLB 1-on-1, to better support newcomers while some of our other services remained on hold. Currently, LARCC is operating on a hybrid model, offering some services in person and others remotely.

WHAT SURPRISES YOU MOST WITH RESPECT TO YOUR WORK WITH LARCC?

Not surprises but rather amazes – *our staff’s passion, dedication, and willingness* to go the extra mile by quickly learning and adapting to the new “normal” in order to ensure that each newcomer receives the best service possible.

Want to see your program in an upcoming CSS Spotlight?
Email: communications@cssalberta.ca

CSS IN THE NEWS

Check out the links below to see recent news!

English conversation program helps Edmonton newcomers connect online <http://bit.ly/CBCISS>

No Room at the Inn campaign raising funds to support women’s shelters <http://bit.ly/CSSnrati>

‘Seniors are in need’: Elder abuse support program seeing an increase in demand <http://bit.ly/JournalEARS>

Sign of Hope Triumphs!

- On September 22, 2020, we launched our annual Sign of Hope Fall Appeal and called upon our many supporters to help us raise \$2 million to support the vulnerable individuals we serve through our Sign of Hope funded programs. We are beyond excited to share that because of our donors, community partners, and staff we have successfully raised over **\$2.45 million!**
- In 2020, **279** staff contributed **\$49,498.38** towards our Sign of Hope Campaign! We are tremendously grateful and want to say a special thank you - to each of you, for continuing to support those we serve today, tomorrow, and beyond.
- In addition to the **\$2.45 million** raised, our Fund Development team worked extremely hard to secure more than **\$550,000** in COVID-19 special grant funding to help those in our care through this trying pandemic.

Faith's Offering

Words to feed your soul

To Bless the Space Between Us
John O'Donoghue

I arise today

*In the name of Silence
Womb of the Word,
In the name of Stillness,
Home of belonging,
In the name of the Solitude
Of the soul and the Earth.*

I arise today

*Blessed by all things,
Wings of breath,
Delight of eyes,
Wonder of Whisper,
Intimacy of touch,
Eternity of Soul,
Urgency of thought,
Miracle of health,
Embrace of God.*

May I live this day

*Compassionate of heart,
Clear in word,
Gracious in awareness,
Courageous in thought,
Generous in love.*



I.T. Moment

Kirsten Anderson, Director, I.T.

Cybersecurity Training

A new online cybersecurity training course has launched! The mandatory training must be completed by all staff by March 31, 2021, and can be taken online at any time.

We can all do our part to keep the agency safe from another cybersecurity incident. This training is a critical part of keeping CSS safe from cybercriminals, and will provide you with important skills that will help you identify security threats such as malware, ransomware, and phishing scams.

For more information, including instructions about how to access the training, visit [the Portal](#).



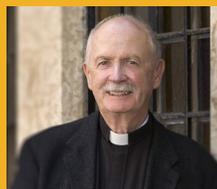
Welcome Trevor Mireau, our new Chief Financial Officer



We're pleased to welcome our new Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Trevor Mireau, to the CSS family! Raised in the Edmonton area, Trevor brings more than 20 years of experience working with public agencies and not-for-profits in Alberta.

*We are delighted to welcome Trevor to our team.
Visit [the Portal](#) for more about our new CFO!*

Passing of Fr. Mike McCaffery



It is with a heavy heart we share news of the passing of Fr. Mike McCaffery, a beloved CSS family member and a deeply admired man. Fr. Mike was as witty as he was compassionate, and this is a loss that is deeply felt by many across the agency who were blessed to know him.

While it is difficult to say good-bye, there is solace in knowing Fr. Mike is now 'face-to-face' with our loving and compassionate God (1 Cor. 13) whom he so faithfully and lovingly served throughout his lifetime.

Jamie Anderson once wrote, "grief is just love with no place to go." If you are struggling with the weight of grief in light of this, or any recent news, our Employee and Family Assistance program is available to support you. Reach out by calling 1-800-663-1142 or find more details about the program on [the Portal](#). To read more on Father Mike, or to watch a video tribute on his legacy, [please visit the Portal](#).



Re-charge your batteries!

by Susan Rizzuto, Chief Administrative Officer

As last year ended I hoped this one would be different.
Let's face it: 2020 was so often exhausting!

But one lesson I learned is that maintaining mental wellbeing is an every day activity. After all, I charge my cell phone every day so I also need to charge my own battery. So, I enjoy a meal with my family, read a good book and take a walk outside.

These small things help me out. *What are the things that help you?*
E-mail communications@cssalberta.ca and we'll share a selection of your ideas on The Portal.



Stories from the Frontlines

At CSS, the people we serve are at the heart of everything we do. Nothing demonstrates that more than the countless ways our staff continued to show up for our clients this holiday season.

With the new restrictions in place throughout Alberta, staff were challenged to find creative ways to celebrate while still keeping everyone safe – and they certainly rose to the occasion.

Our High Risk Youth program staff spent days in full PPE, collecting, sanitizing, and wrapping gifts and stockings, just to ensure our youth had something to open on Christmas morning. Even our littlest elf, Lilo, came out to help with deliveries!

We're humbled by the fact that, even in the face of a global pandemic, our staff will stop at nothing to ensure those we serve feel treasured. Thank you to everyone across the agency who went above and beyond this holiday season!



SWELL Christmas at CSS

This Christmas, your SWELL committee launched an interactive webpage for staff to participate in some awesome holiday activities. Check out some of the highlights here, and be sure to visit the [SWELL site](#) for more!



Board Bulletin

A special thank you is extended to our Board of Directors for their kindness in gifting all agency employees with a \$30 gift card for Tim Horton's over the Christmas holidays. *Cheers!*



JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

MARCH						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

APRIL						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

MAY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

JULY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

-  EMPLOYEE TIME CARD ENTRY AND APPROVAL DEADLINE
-  SUPERVISOR TIMECARD APPROVAL DEADLINE (11AM)
-  ALL EMPLOYEES PAYDAY
-  STATUTORY HOLIDAYS
-  HOURLY ONLY
-  SALARY STAT DAY IN LIEU

EMPLOYEES:

1. Enter and approve your time prior to cut-off to ensure you are paid accurately and on time.
2. Submit time off requests for vacation, wellness days, or sick time, prior to cut off date.
3. If a correction to your time card is needed, notify your supervisor.

SUPERVISORS:

1. Check to ensure your staff have approved their time. If not, follow up to ensure their time has been entered accurately. Emphasize importance of accurate time entry and approval.
2. Approve or deny time off requests.
3. Ensure time entry is correct for statutory or general holidays.
4. Correct any errors in your employees' time entry.
5. Review and approve employee time cards prior to cut-off to ensure your staff are paid accurately and on time.

FOR ASSISTANCE:

1. For assistance with time entry, call 780-391-3229 or email kronos@cssalbarta.ca.
2. For tips, "how to" guides, and video tutorials on Kronos go to Portal.
3. For corrections to an employee's time card, supervisors need to email an Adjustment form to payroll@cssalbarta.ca.
4. When an employee takes a leave of absence or changes positions, supervisors must complete an Employee Change Form, located on Portal and send it your HR Service Partner, HR@cssalbarta.ca.

When a payday falls on a general holiday or weekend, the payday will move to the business day before.
e.g. Dec. 25 will be Dec. 24 instead