

ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

THE YOGA
ASSOCIATION OF
ALBERTA



A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DONALEE CAMPBELL

A big thank you to the Board of Directors for all their support. These people volunteer their time selflessly on behalf of the YAA. Karen Hamdon, our current Vice-President is stepping down this year to spend more time with her grandchildren. She's been on the Board since 2006, so that's 18 years of service – thank you Karen!

Thanks also to the staff, Debbie Spence, Krista Power, Candace Westeroth, and also to Dave Downing, who work hard year-round pulling all of this together.

We couldn't do any of this without all of them! From all of us at the YAA, Thank you!



David Maulsby,
President



Anita Sielecki,
Past President

2023
*Board of
Directors*



Karen Hamdon,
Vice-President



Erin Michie,
Treasurer



Steven Bell,
Secretary



Melanie Checknita,
MAL, Edmonton



Colleen Gehlke,
MAL, High River



Anne Douglas,
MAL, Banff



Helen Morgan,
MAL, Red Deer

THE YOGA ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

Membership numbers are climbing back up since Covid losses. We now have **1290 members, 807 paid and 477 free**. In 2023 we welcomed in **406 new members**. A big welcome to all our new members!

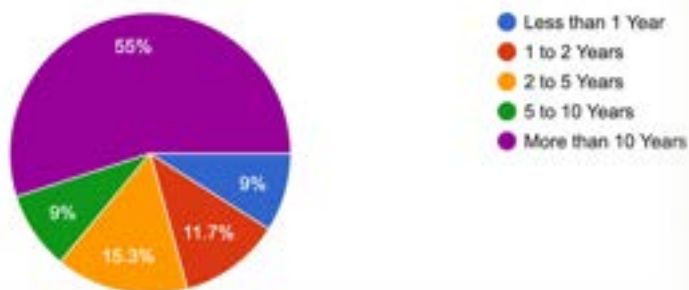
ANNUAL SURVEY

An Annual Survey was distributed again this year to all members. We did a prize draw and the \$50 coupon for props or books from the YAA store went to June Knobel. Congratulations June! Thanks to all of you that responded. Your feedback is very valuable to us. Following are some valuable insights we got from this year's survey.

OUR MEMBERS

Most of our members have been involved with the YAA for more than 10 years, but there are new people coming in. 20% of those who responded have been members for less than 2 years.

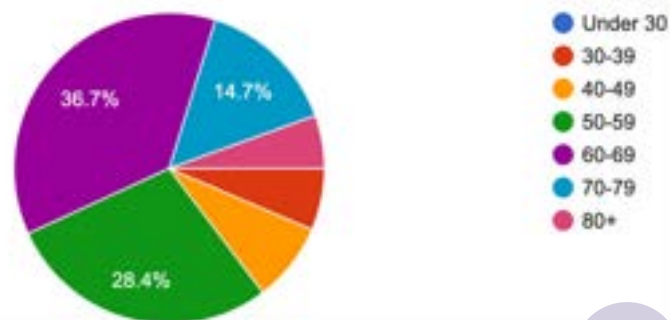
How long have you been a member of the YAA?
111 responses



GENERATIONS OF YOGA

Age demographics show we're mostly in our 50's, 60's & 70's, but we do have some younger people coming in. It's interesting to note there are just as many in their 80's as in their 30's – which shows some powerful longevity and positive results from all that yoga!

What is your age?
109 responses



HELP US GET THE WORD OUT!

70% of us heard about the YAA through our teachers. This shows the pivotal role that yoga teachers have in referring new members to the YAA. We now have new brochures and beautiful bookmarks available in the office (Thanks to Jennifer Myers/now McLaren who painted the original), so please drop by the office and pick some of these up to distribute to your students, colleagues and friends.

Website and social media referrals are showing an increase of about 5% more than last year, which shows that someone is paying attention to what we're doing online. When we asked if you would recommend the YAA to others, over 99% of you said yes. The one that said no indicated that they "just have not associated enough."

Please do help us spread the word about the YAA in any way you can. We need to grow our members to keep our organization sustainable. And we can't do that without you!

How did you hear about the YAA?

110 responses



- Website/Social Media
- Yoga Teacher
- Friend, Family Member or Colleague



OUR TEACHERS

We surveyed YAA Certified Teachers on their activities in 2023 and found that almost 80% are offering free or subsidized classes, almost 60% are offering accessible group classes, and 24% participated in diversity and/or inclusion training.

Linda Dumont dedicated her life to helping Edmonton's poor and homeless in the inner city.



79%

of YAA Teachers are offering free or subsidized classes

59%

of YAA Teachers are offering accessible group classes

52%

of YAA Teachers are offering trauma-sensitive classes.

Over half of YAA Teachers are offering trauma-sensitive classes. That's a big testament to the work we did in 2022 and 2023 with Dr. Paula Fayerman in bringing trauma informed training to YAA teachers. The YAA will continue that work in her honour, through her memorial fund, which is still open for donations.



Program Ratings

Please rate the YAA programs and services you have personally accessed and/or participated in.

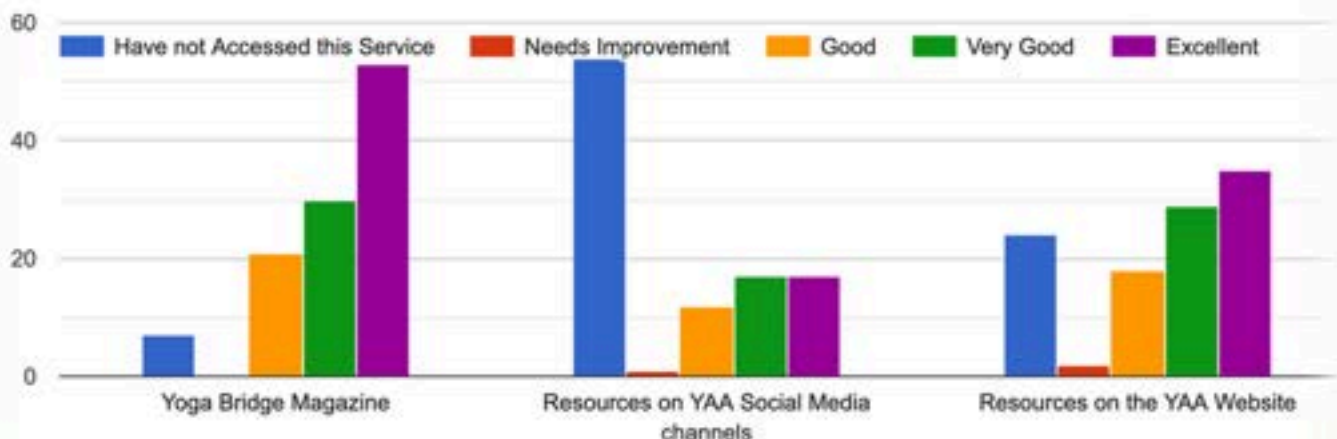


Ratings for YAA programs and services were mostly excellent. There are still many that have yet to access these so we'd welcome you all to join in how and where you can. The Teacher Showcase Series is the most attended and has the highest rating.

The *Yoga Bridge* magazine continues to be our most well-loved communication channel, and our website and social media are showing big strides from where they were before.

Communication Channels

Please rate the following YAA services you have personally accessed.



Your Voice Matters!



Feedback from the member survey was very much appreciated. We received lots of great responses to use in grant applications, promotions and advertising. Please feel free to share your feedback anytime - you don't need to wait for the next survey! This Word Cloud is made up of the most used words from some of the open-ended feedback questions.

New Logo and Website



The new logo and website were both launched in the last year and have been getting rave reviews! We encourage all members to go in and set up your Community Profile page and introduce yourself to the online community. It's a safe space to connect with other members and have real conversations about yoga.

Teachers, please claim your Directory listing, and move your pin to show students where to find you. Add in your events listings too. We have room now to share weekly or daily class offerings, and much more!

This website is great resource with a lot of potential. We need members and teachers to start filling in their information to put it to good use.

THE YOGA ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA

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Yoga Outreach

Yoga Changes Lives



“

I live with a rare form of Muscular Dystrophy and participate in one of the yoga classes funded by the YAA. Our instructor focuses on building strength, balance and flexibility, but also joy, acceptance and laughter.

These classes are held in my neighbourhood, they are free, they are user-friendly and help reduce my isolation. Thank you, YAA!

Margaret
Outreach Program Participant

The YAA continues to offer regular classes for inmates at the Edmonton Remand Centre, and we're looking to move into the Youth Offenders Centre and the Women's Prison as well. We're still doing classes for the Greater Edmonton Foundation Seniors Housing, the Candora Society in Abbotsfield, and the Edmonton Newcomer's Society. We've also got a full schedule of classes planned at the Enoch Cree Nation Schools again this May. In 2023 we also did a class for a Stollery fundraiser, the Heritage Seniors Centre, and one for the 'Gutsy Walk' for Crohn's & Colitis.

We need more funding to be able to expand these programs, and that's an ongoing pursuit. We have submitted several grant applications, some we're still waiting to hear back on, and we continue to apply for more. They are time consuming to write, few and far between, and extremely competitive.

Thanks to our members for your generous donations to the YAA. We really can't do this without you!

FINANCIAL REPORT

Prepared by Debbie Spence, Finance and
Newsletter Coordinator

Debbie Spence thanked Erin Michie, Culley Schweger Bell and Kristine Ouellette for auditing the annual financial statements.

Income/Expenses - Membership revenues are up because teachers were offered discount lifetime memberships. Donations are up because of a matching grants offered by the AB Gov't, SPAR. Prop sales are up. Yoga Bridge Newsletter has been renamed Yoga Bridge Magazine. TTP has more people attending, and we have more workshop income (thanks in part to Anita's annual workshops and the Kavindu retreat which she organizes). Zoom license sales are stable, advertising income is down. Insurance costs are down thanks to David and Donalee's efforts. 2021 had a net income due to investment income and special Covid grants so this money, along with money from the CIP (a matching grant project), allowed us to spend more this year.

Although income is down from some grants it has been made up for through donations and prop sales indicating some self-sustaining capability. 2023 losses are largely because of expenditures through the CIP grant and increased outreach spending.

Total revenue was less than \$250,000 for the last two years, so as a charity we don't need to collect GST now - which reduces expenses for items YAA charges money for (workshops, props etc.), as GST was included in our pricing. If our revenue goes up in the future we will have to start paying GST again.

Balance Sheet - \$50,000 needed to be cashed out to cover expenses/liabilities but balance sheet is still above the average of the past ten years. Registered charities must spend a certain percentage of income on charitable activities and YAA is well above these minimum levels.



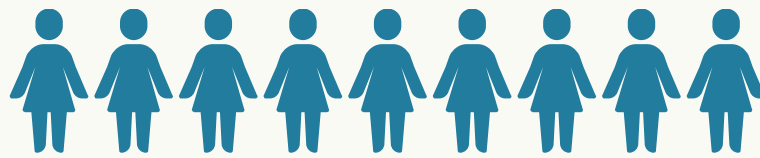
SOCIAL MEDIA

2024 STATS

- **95% of Canadians have one or more social accounts**
- **They spend 2 hours per day (average) on these platforms.**

OUR AUDIENCE

- Under 45 ↑
- Outside of YEG and YYC



Followers UP 87

2022	2482
2023	2569



Followers UP 106

2022	642
2023	748



Followers UP 19

2022	71
2023	90



REACH 2022 V. 2023



2022

Reach = 17,572

2023

Reach = 29,192



66% YoY



2022

Reach = 1,910

2023

Reach = 4,734



147% YoY



2022

Reach = 4,562

2023

Reach = 4,755



4% YoY

PROFILE VISITS IN 2023

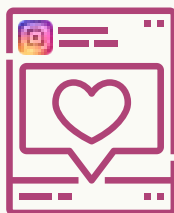


CONTENT



429 pieces in 2023

Up 51% over 2022



261 pieces in 2023

Up 59% over 2022

2024 GOALS



Reach: 40,000 (29K)
Followers: 2,600



Reach: 6,000 (4.7K)
Followers: 850



Impressions: 6,000 (4.7K)
Followers: 150



2024 PRIORITIES

- 1 Celebrating YAA's work and community
- 2 Diversifying and growing our audience
- 3 Promoting awareness of the YAA in Alberta



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- Follow our accounts
 - Like, share, save, COMMENT
 - Engage with our content
 - Share your photos and videos
 - Tag us on social

TEACHER TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Prepared by Krista Power

Thank you to the TTP & Certification Committee: Anita Sielecki, Beth McCann, Karen Hamdon, Mary LeBlanc, Teddy Hyndman, Neil Haggard and Tammy Richard. The time, insight, suggestions, and effort they put into helping us continue to offer high quality Teacher Training Programs is invaluable and much appreciated.

We currently have **20 students enrolled in the 200-Hour TTP and 12 enrolled in our 100-hour Immersion program.**

We continue to receive positive feedback from our students about our Core Curriculum Classes, which are mandatory for both programs.



Thank you so much for all that everyone does to make these classes happen.

Loved it - it was a great day.

I felt included in the day even though I joined on Zoom.

It was an excellent class.

I really enjoyed the very sincere, safe and welcoming environment that this session provided.

The workshop was planned very well and I left feeling much more confident and positive about my journey to becoming a teacher

TEACHER TRAINING

Our Teacher Training Program is doing very well, with our Core Curriculum Classes and Teaching Skills Workshops regularly being at or near capacity for in-person spots. We do have a Zoom livestream option for these classes as well, which is helpful when we reach capacity, when we have out of town students, or if students simply want to practice from the comfort of their own homes. Classes are recorded for quality control and insurance purposes only and are not shared.

Exciting changes are coming for our Teacher Training Program in 2025! In January, Core Curriculum classes will be increased to six hours in length and will be offered on **Saturdays and Sundays** once a month rather than Saturdays only. This will allow TTP and Immersion students to complete their programs in as little as one year if they choose to do so. Teaching Skills Workshops will change to Saturday and Sunday only with no Friday evening class. Students can tailor their training to suit their needs, budget and schedule and can still opt to move through the program at a slower pace.



Currently, if students miss a class, they need to wait two years for the class to come around again. Offering full weekend classes will reduce the wait time to one year. This will allow more flexibility for students and allow us to be more competitive. It may also help address potential space issues as students move through more quickly.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

The YAA now has a total of 228 Certified Teachers:

- 19 at the 200-Hour Level
- 48 at the 300-Hour Level
- 51 at the 500-Hour Level
- 20 Intermediate Teachers (750-Hour Level)
- 90 Senior Teachers (1000-Hour Level)
- 81 of these Teachers have Permanent Certification (various levels)

Stats for 2023 Calendar Year:

- 56 Certification Approvals Total
- 8 Initial Certifications (1 YAA TTP Graduate + 7 Equivalency Certifications, various levels)
- 45 Recertifications (various levels)
- 2 Permanent Certifications
- 1 Advanced Training Level Upgrade (500-Hour Level)



NEW CERTIFICATIONS AND ADVANCED TRAINING

**Awarded Since Last AGM
(September 2023 – May 2024)**

Initial Certifications

YAA-TTP Students Graduated

- Sara Eisenzimmer (Sturgeon County) – 200 Hour Level
- Peter Skirving (Calgary) – 500 Hour Level
- Lesly Deuchar (Port McNeill) – 200 Hour Level
- Karmen Shennan (Hinton) – 200 Hour Level

Equivalency Certifications

- Lisa Bartlett (St. Albert) – 200 Hour Level
- Denise Delisle (Grande Cache) – 200 Hour Level
- Constance Meisner (Port Moody, BC) – 500 Hour Level
- Joan Radford (Edmonton) – 500 Hour Level
- Elizabeth Danyluk (Sturgeon County) – 500 Hour Level
- Harpreet Kaur (Edmonton) – 500 Hour Level
- Dagmar Sanchez (Edmonton) – 200 Hour Level
- Janice Williamson (Edmonton) – 500 Hour Level

Upgrades to Advanced Training Levels

500-Hour Level:

- Sandra Neis (Thorsby)
- Colleen Dibden (Edmonton)
- Kathleen Gagnon (Edmonton)

Intermediate Status, 750-Hour Level:

- Kelsey Wilson (Edmonton)

Senior Teacher Status, 1000-Hour Level

- Vera Resera (Edmonton)

Permanent Certification

- Nita Jalkanen (Edmonton) – Senior Teacher Status, 1000 Hour Level



MENTORSHIP

A Note for YAA Senior Teachers :

If you are a YAA Certified Senior Teacher in Alberta, please consider becoming a Mentor. Mentors set their own schedule and pricing for their services, and fees are paid directly to the Mentor by the student. Mentors are responsible for providing 10 hours of Practicum, which includes regular meetings and consultations to review progress and assignments, and a minimum of 2 hours of supervised teaching. Students are also expected to attend regular weekly classes with their Mentor throughout the duration of their program.

If you are a YAA Senior Teacher and are interested in becoming a Mentor, please claim your directory listing on our new website and edit your listing to indicate your interest in mentoring. Contact us if you have any questions.



EDITOR'S REPORT

Prepared by Dave Downing

I'm Dave Downing, volunteer editor of the Bridge since September 2020. I work with an editorial board of five YAA members - Donalee Campbell, Kim Fraser, Judith Mirus, Anita Sielecki and Debbie Spence. Thanks to all of you for your help and encouragement over the past several years. And thanks also to our contributors, without whom we would have a thinner and less interesting newsletter.

The *Yoga Bridge* magazine is, together with the website (yoga.ca), a consistent means of communication with members of the YAA. It is published three times a year (spring, winter and fall) and distributed by mail (bound paper copies) and email (.pdf versions) to almost 2,000 recipients. Its primary purpose is to share perspectives on various approaches to yoga and allied fields. It is also a written record of trends in our association, going back long before the advent of social media and this is an important attribute.

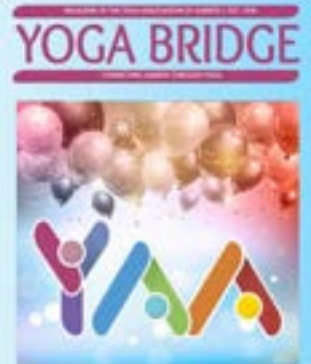
From 2010 to Spring 2024, 350 original articles and several reprints have been published on many topics that cover a spectrum of topics under yoga, meditation, holistic health and related subjects. Poetic and photographic submissions are featured in many of the newsletter magazines.

An important function of the magazine is to highlight the YAA's acclaimed yoga teaching and certification programs. Outreach has been and continues to be an important aspect of YAA's focus on service to the community and quite a few articles summarizing the outcomes of service to local communities and the prison system have been published. A community events calendar provides members with an opportunity to let others know of courses, trips and other venues for augmenting their education and experience.

The YAA communicates administrative news of interest to members such as the highlights of annual general meetings and messages from the president and executive director. Finally, the YAA advertises yoga props and other products of interest to readers on the back page of the newsletter.

We encourage our members to share yoga-related experiences with our print and on-line readers through articles, book reviews, poems, drawings, and photographs. We are always looking for YAA teachers to submit articles on asanas. Submission guidelines are provided on the website, where you can now also find easy access to a wealth of articles and archives to browse.

THE YOGA BRIDGE MAGAZINE



Highlights of 2023-24:

- The **Fall 2023** magazine paid homage to Alberta yoga pioneers Isa Duxbury, Martin Jerry and Grace Little. Feature articles included: Ayurvedic basics and preparation for the fall and winter seasons; an interesting yoga prop with its origins in martial arts; an amusing reflection on one person's experience with yoga and yoga teachers; a personal account of the physical, psychological and spiritual support that yoga can provide in traumatic situations; and a summary of one person's experiences with a rainbow of spiritual practices in the Book Review section. A summary of the Spring 2023 AGM is included with this issue.
- The **Winter 2024** magazine honoured well-known Alberta yoga teacher Ann Waschuk. Feature articles included: an account of the links a sincere student forged between First Nations and Yogic perspectives while living in an ashram in southern BC; an article on appropriate yoga activities during and after pregnancy; the value of yoga in dealing with personal trauma (continued from the Fall 2023 article); The Member's Musings section included a short insightful view of looking back through the last year and forward to the next one. In the Book Review section, the reviewer gave her perspectives on a recently published manual on movement, fitness and health and how it helped her yoga practice. The Outreach section highlighted the experiences and insights gained by a longtime yoga teacher through yoga classes she taught at the Enoch reserve.
- The **Spring 2024** magazine included a tribute to Dr. Paula Fayerman and her legacy of love and service. Feature articles included the value of structured and unstructured yoga practice in the pursuit of self-knowledge and Ayurvedic principles and practices for the spring and summer seasons. The Book Review section included a positive review of Yoga Therapy for Backs authored by YAA foundational yogacharyas McAmmond and Sielecki. Our own Debbie Spence provides some interesting perspectives on meditation. Senior teacher Teddy Hyndman discusses the merits of and approaches to Tadasana.

Volunteers

Are the Heart of our Community

Volunteers are the heart of our community. For 2023/24 we have 178 volunteers to thank!

The YAA is unique as the only inclusive, provincial, non-profit yoga association in Canada. We are a cooperative community of yoga students and teachers from diverse backgrounds, styles and lineages, all coming together to work towards a common vision: a world where all people can experience well-being, wholeness and community through yoga.

As a registered charity, we rely on the support of our donors and our volunteers. You serve on the Board and on Committees, you teach free classes, you volunteer at events or in the office, you write and edit articles, and you go out into your communities and spread the word about the YAA and the good we do. Yoga does change lives, but we could not do this without all of you! On behalf of all of those whose lives you touch, thank you!

Alexander, Anita
Anderson, Michelle
Ayre, Sandy
Babcock, Jamie
Balfour, Sappho
Beaith-Johnson, Amy
Beattie, Pamela
Bell, Steven
Bell-Hiller, Audrey
Ben, Moul
Benesova, Zuzana
Bhambhani, Heather
Bhanot, Amit
Bleakney, Donna
Boehm, Kat
Brettle, Natalya
Brooks, Charmaine
Bunton, Catherine
Bustin, Jennifer
Butot, Misha
Campbell, Donalee
Carnegie Fehr, Paula
Chase, Tracey
Checknita, Melanie
Chiasson, Theresa
Coutu, Robert
Creasey, Mona
Cullis, Lana
D'Silva, Adrijana
Danyluk, Elizabeth
Darinka Turin, Diana
De Pinto, Ralph
DeClerck, Sandra
Dibden, Colleen
Douglas, Anne
Downing, Dave

Dreger, Georgina
Duxbury, Isa
Eastham, Barbara
Eisenzimmer, Sara
Fayerman, Paula
Fisher, Carlean
Foss, Dale
Foster, Rachel
Fraser, Kim
Fulcher, Lindsay
Gehrke, Colleen
George, Mike
Haggard, Neil
Hamdon, Karen
Hammond, Lois
Hansen-Ohman, Kim
Harasym, Katherine
Hendrickson, Jenn
HoRmann, Angelika
Hucal, Dianne
Hurley, Janette
Hyndman, Teddy
Jackson, Candice
Jeong, Julie
Jodoin, Susan
Jones, Scott
Jones, Terri
Kabalo, Paula
Kadis, Linda
Kapoor, Kajal
Kaye, Kelly
Kim, Megan
Kitagawa, Kathy
Kumpula, Iris
Lalonde, Theresa
Langenberg, Marcia

Larmour, Judy
Lawrence, Shannon
LeBlanc, Mary
Lee, Eunsook
Legere, Lory
Little, Grace
Liu, Diana
Lloyd, Sam
Lobkowicz, Susan
Lounsbury, Carol
MacArthur, Vickie
MacDonald, Jason
Macleod, Sherry
Mamer, Dawn
Maulsby, David
Mayne, Mic
McCann, Beth
McClellan, Sandy
McConnell, Mugs
McCracken, Joan
McFaul, George
McGillivray, Margaret
McLennan, Linda
McMahon, Jay
McMillan, Valerie
McNab, Chuck
Mercier, Nathalie
Michie, Erin
Miller, Jaimy
Miller, Jennie
Miller, Richard
Mills, Janine
Milner, Margaret
Mirus, Judy
Monikowski, Barb
Morgan, Helen

Murphy, Judy
Myers, Jennifer
Myers, Patricia
Narine, Marie
Nogue, Rosemary
Nugent, Beverley
O'Dwyer, Gail
Ohama, Adele
Ouellette, Colleen
Ouellette, Kristine
Palomino, Eugenio
Petrich, Val
Pollock, Sandrine
Power, Krista
Prashar, Neeru
Price, Carol
Provencal, Jill
Pyrozko, Jerry
Quade, Joan
Quan, Susan
Quelch, Charlotte
RaR, Renee
Rathnavalu, Kyla
Resera, Vera
Richard, Tammy
Ritter, Barbara
Robinson, Lesley
Roy, Catherine
Sachdeva, Aarti
Sampson, Elaine
Satchwell, Karla
Schrader, Alvin
Schroder, Andrea
Schwab, Erin
Schweger Bell, Culley
Secord, Carol

Sharp, Lynnda
Shennan, Karmen
Sheppard, Linda
Sielecki, Anita
Sinclair, Julie
Singh, Shanti
Skirving, Peter
Skrobot, Corinne
Smith, Janet
Smith, Shelly
Smyth, Diane
Snider, Phyllis
Soldan, Anita
Somers, Sandi
Spence, Addie
Spence, Danae
Spence, Debbie
Spurr, Linda & James
Stadlweiser, Colleen
Steed, Jennifer
Stone, Becky
Stralak, Karen
Stuart, Broda
Swenson, Lynne
Thompson, Kim
Tian, Shu
Topinka, Debby
Ulan, Allison
Ustina, Melanie
van Riel, Gwenn
Waschuk, Ann
Wasylishen, Valerie
Wilson, Kelsey
Winchester, Maxine

OUR FUNDERS

Special thanks to all our donors for your support.
We could not do it without you!



The **Gift of Yoga Fund** in partnership with
the Edmonton Community Foundation.

