

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25



www.pmast.org





Mission Statement

To equip youth, families and communities with the skills to manage conflict where they live, learn, work and play.



Vision Statement

Everyone will have the skills to manage conflict positively to promote emotional health and wellbeing.

Racial Justice and Equity Statement

Many of the young people who participate in our programs and their families, may have been victims of racism, including from their peers.

At PMAST, we do not feel this is in any way acceptable and we seek to encourage young people to embrace their differences and learn from the diversity of thought and experience they each bring to the table.

Our programs are focused on equipping young people with the tools to communicate, manage conflict and advocate for themselves in situations where they may feel discriminated against, and to learn how they may be hurting others through their words and actions.

All PMAST programs go beyond inclusiveness and acceptance. We collaborate with our key partners, schools, and teachers to gain a deeper understanding of how young people may be affected by racism. We are actively reviewing opportunities to integrate additional support on topics such as unconscious bias into our programming.

Spanning generations, acknowledging the land is a traditional custom among Indigenous people when welcoming outsiders onto their land and into their homes. To build respectful relationships, acknowledging the land is an important part of reconciliation. It honours the authentic history of North America, its original people, and tells the story of the creation of this country that has historically been missing.

Treaty 7 Territory Land Acknowledgement

In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge that we live, work, and play on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy, the Tsuut'ina Nation, the Îyâxe Nakoda Nations, and the Métis Nation Region 3. We recognize that land acknowledgement is one part of an ongoing journey toward understanding and respect. By honouring this land and its original peoples, we commit to building relationships grounded in truth, learning, and shared responsibility.



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CELEBRATING 26 YEARS OF CHANGING THE LIVES OF CALGARY YOUTH

In 1998, Calgary's Youth Probation Officer was enrolled in the University of Calgary's Mediation/Negotiation program when he expressed his frustration with the current juvenile system's lack of success to the program's coach. He imagined what might be possible if youth learned practical tools for communication, empathy, and problem-solving before conflict escalated. The idea was just a spark in Winston Blake's mind, shared by the coach and the Community Mediation Calgary Society, which agreed to a special project.

Winston received management approval, and a program, **Peer Mediation And Skills (PMAST)** was born.



Brenda and Flo brunch with Winston Blake



In 3 years, the graduation rate increased from about 25% to over 60%.

Today, PMAST stands as a testament to what can happen when one spark becomes a collective effort. Thousands of young people have learned how to communicate with confidence, manage conflict with maturity, and carry these skills into adulthood.

Twenty-six years later, the heart of that original idea remains the same: every young person deserves the tools, support, and encouragement to build a hopeful future.

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

With immense joy, pride, and deep gratitude, I extend my warmest congratulations to Peer Mediation And Skills Training (PMAST) on reaching this incredible 25th anniversary milestone! What a journey it has been, a journey filled with purpose, dedication, and the unwavering belief in the power of peaceful conflict management and personal growth.

Twenty-five years ago, PMAST began as a spark, a vision to equip young people, families, and communities with skills in peer mediation, conflict management, empathy, and effective communication. Today, that spark has ignited a flame that continues to burn brightly, bringing hope, understanding, and transformation to everyone touched by your work. The lives you have impacted, the relationships you have healed, and the confidence you have built in others are a testament to your passion and commitment.

To each board member, volunteer, facilitator, and team member, thank you from the bottom of my heart. You have poured your time, energy, and love into this mission, and your efforts have made PMAST more than just an organization. You have created a movement of compassion, resilience, and healing. Through your tireless efforts, you have demonstrated that even the most challenging conflicts can be addressed with understanding and resolved with care.

It fills me with pride to see how far PMAST has come and the profound impact it continues to make. You have planted seeds of peace and empowerment that will grow for generations to come. Your work matters, not just in theory, but in the everyday lives of youth who now know how to communicate, resolve differences, and believe in themselves.

As you celebrate this remarkable 25-year milestone, I want you to know that this is not just a celebration of years passed; it is a celebration of hope, perseverance, and the unwavering belief that positive change is possible. You have shown us that with the right tools and the right hearts, we can build a world where understanding triumphs over conflict.

Congratulations once again on this phenomenal achievement! I am excited for PMAST's future and the lives you will continue to transform. Here's to another 25 years of empowering people, resolving conflicts, and building a more peaceful world.

With profound gratitude, pride, and joy,

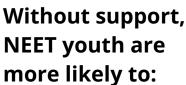
Winston Blake

Founder, Peer Mediation And Skills Training

Winston Blake

Why PMAST Matters: The Reality Facing **Alberta Youth**

So, what is the future for these young people?



- Struggle with mental and emotional health
- Turn to substance use
- Become involved in criminal activity
- Rely on social services

Cost of **PMAST** Support

Youth Legacy Program cost: \$1,300 to \$2,000 per youth

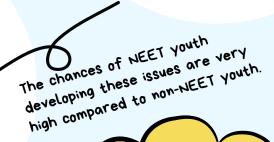
Public Safety Canada says Cost of incarceration (2014): \$65,526 per year per

* Preventing one high-risk youth from entering a cycle of crime is valued at 2.6 to 5.3 million US dollars, or 3.5 to 7.1 million Canadian dollars.

This is why early support is one of the most powerful investments we can make.

> * by Mark A. Cohen, Law Professor at Vanderbilt University





Did You

Know?

ALBERTA HAS OVER

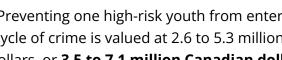
(NEET - Not in Education, not

Employed, with no Training),

Mostly in Southern Alberta



COST OF INACTION



How can we not afford to implement programs that Will result in huge future cost savings?

PMAST'S ROLE IN PREVENTION

PMAST addresses these challenges by offering youth the skills that many have never been taught, including: practical conflict management, healthy communication strategies, emotional regulation, goal setting and future planning, and Relationship building.

These skills help young people see themselves differently, not as a problem to be fixed, but as individuals who are capable, valued, and able to contribute to their communities.

PARTNERSHIPS THAT STRENGTHEN IMPACT

To support this work, PMAST partners with organizations such as **Struggle Is Your Success**, whose Dream It Plan It Build It program helps youth identify their strengths, clarify their goals, and build a meaningful path toward their future. Together, we are creating a circle of support that helps youth move forward with purpose.





SUPPORTING STUDENTS THROUGH CONNECTION, CONFIDENCE, SKILL BUILDING, AND CONFLICT MANAGMENT

PMAST continued to strengthen its presence in schools across Calgary and Airdrie. Our programs equip students with practical tools for effective communication, conflict resolution, and emotional resilience, all within a supportive and inclusive environment. Many of the youth we met were new to Canada, adjusting to a new culture, new languages, and new social norms. Our work in classrooms helped them feel understood, welcomed, and empowered.





SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Nelson Mandela High School

English Language Learner (ELL) Programs

One of our longest and most meaningful partnerships has been with Nelson Mandela High School, where we have supported English Language Learner (ELL) students for many years. Many of these students are newly arrived in Canada, navigating unfamiliar systems and carrying experiences shaped by displacement, trauma, or conflict.

In 2024, PMAST delivered programming to a group of 19 ELL students led by long-time supporter Ms. Tina Merali, who retired this year after a remarkable career of service. Her dedication created safe spaces for students representing many cultures, languages, and lived experiences. Some had never attended school before arriving in Canada, and others came from regions affected by war or political conflict.

Our sessions helped students:

- Build confidence in their communication skills
- Understand cultural norms in Canadian schools
- Practice resolving conflict in respectful ways
- Strengthen relationships with classmates from diverse backgrounds



Flo Lye, Brenda Christie, Tina Merali and Liz Borger celebrate Ms. Merali's retirement.

As a tribute to Ms. Merali's leadership and long-standing partnership, our team joined her in celebrating her retirement and the legacy she leaves behind.

MS. MERALI'S TESTIMONIAL

"Our ELL students said the sessions were informative and supportive. They learned skills that were new to them and appreciated how the facilitators adjusted the sessions to match their English levels. Many asked for future sessions to continue building their skills."

Saint Veronica School, Airdrie

Grade 6 classes

In addition to high school programming, PMAST delivered sessions to three Grade 6 classes at Saint Veronica School in Airdrie. These early-intervention sessions support pre-teens in building conflict resolution skills before entering the more socially complex years of junior high.

These younger students demonstrated curiosity and maturity as they learned about:

- Understanding emotions
- Respectful communication
- Navigating peer conflict
- Building healthy friendships

Equipping students with these skills early helps them approach adolescence with confidence and a sense of empathy.





Refugee and Newcomer Students

Building Bridges Across Differences

Many classrooms we visited this year included students from opposite sides of historic or current conflict zones. Sitting together, learning together, and discussing communication openly allowed students to begin seeing one another through a new lens.

Our programs help them:

- Acknowledge and move beyond generational prejudices
- Build trust in a new community
- Develop empathy for peers with different experiences
- Adapt to life in a Canadian school environment

For many, it was the first time they had been asked how they felt, how they experienced conflict, or what support they needed.

THE YOUTH LEGACY PROJECT



The Youth Legacy Project is PMAST's most comprehensive initiative, created to reduce youth involvement in the criminal justice system and break the cycle that often leads to adult incarceration. Many young people who become involved with the justice system are not inherently violent or malicious. Instead, they lack essential conflict management skills and have never been taught constructive ways to navigate stress, emotion, or difficult relationships.

Youth Legacy addresses these gaps with a community-driven model that focuses on prevention, skill-building, and wrap-around support for both youth and their families.

The Need for Early Intervention

Across Canada, more than **\$14,000,000** is spent on adult incarceration **every day**. This does not include the additional costs of courts, probation, disability services, or the long-term impacts on families and communities. Youth who enter the justice system without support often return to the same environments that contributed to their challenges, still without the skills they need to change their path.

International organizations such as **UNODC**, **UNICEF**, **WHO**, **the Council of Europe**, and **NCTSN** agree that youth benefit most from trauma-informed, developmentally aligned, and individualized rehabilitation. Adolescents respond best to relational, supportive, and skill-building interventions that strengthen their ability to choose healthier behaviors.

Many young people in conflict with the law are not lacking potential; The Youth Legacy Project addresses this reality by teaching skills that research shows are missing:

- Conflict management
- Communication and relationship building
- Stress and emotion regulation
- Problem solving
- Planning and future focus

However, the project acknowledges that skills alone are insufficient. Many youth also need mentorship, consistency, and a community that believes in them.

A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN SOLUTION: BUILDING A VILLAGE OF SUPPORT

In 2024, PMAST made significant progress in establishing a local infrastructure of community collaborators, partners, and agencies, who together form a strong "village" around each youth. This village model ensures that participants have access to supports that go far beyond traditional programming.

PMAST continues to do what we do best, which is teaching skills for communication, conflict management, and healthy relationships. At the same time, we recognize that youth often need more than one organization can provide. Through partnerships with local agencies, we collectively create a wrap-around system that helps young people rebalance their lives and move forward with confidence.

Our Core Partners include:

Struggle Is Your Success (SIYS)

Founded by **Moose Abdel**, their "Dream It, Plan It, Build It" program helps youth identify strengths they may not have known they possessed. Through mentorship, goal setting, and real conversations, SIYS helps youth see a pathway toward purpose and independence.



Off the Grid Youth - Airdrie

Founded by community leader **Abe Mawoyo**, this organization supports over 80 local youth, with a focus on academic success, leadership development, and community engagement. Their mentorship network offers a safe space for young people to discuss challenges and reconnect with their community.



Calgary Young Offender Centre

PMAST and SIYS deliver programs that help youth develop communication, decision-making, and future-focused skills.

Together, we strive to create a supportive environment that helps young people rebuild their lives with dignity and purpose.

PMAST'S YOUTH LEGACY TEAM



Brenda Christie, PMAST President and Youth Legacy Program Director, is a founding member of PMAST with a long history of supporting youth, identifying societal gaps, and creating solutions to help them reach their full potential.



Moose Abdel is the part-time Frontline Project coordinator for PMAST's Youth Legacy Project, supporting youth to overcome challenges and build resilience. He is also the Founder and CEO of Struggle is Your Success (SIYS), mentoring youth in entrepreneurship and personal growth, and developing programs at the Calgary Young Offenders Centre to help at-risk youth gain skills for education and employment.



Khushi Chowhan, Youth Legacy's Community Engagement Specialist. Airdrie-born and outgoing, Khushi uses her marketing expertise and local connections to engage community leaders and organizations, helping spread the word about Youth Legacy.



Abe Mawoyo, Community Youth Liaison for PMAST's Youth Legacy Program, is an Airdrie resident dedicated to equipping youth for personal and professional success. In 2011, he founded Off the Grid Youth, mentoring over 80 local youth, many of whom achieved top academic results and earned scholarships, while fostering respect and community involvement.



Florence Lye, C.Med. **IMI,** PMAST Program Director, is an experienced mediator specializing in interpersonal and family conflict, with a strong focus on cultural and ethnic diversity. A Certified Mediator member of the International Mediation Institute and part of the original Alberta Justice Mediation Program team, she brings deep expertise to every case. A certified life coach, Flo helps youth and families build conflict-management skills and also empowers others through her online wellness business and comedy company.



Liz Borger, Q. Med is a Corporate and Family Mediator with Fresh Start Mediation and a trainer at PMAST. She brings compassion and clarity to her work with youth and families, drawing on a background in business (BComm and MBA, Haskayne School of Business) and entrepreneurship. A dedicated volunteer and parent, Liz supports Community Mediation Calgary Society, PMAST, and CR Day.



Crystal Brown is a Calgary-based mediator with international experience in Australia and Malaysia, bringing an inclusive perspective to conflict resolution. She holds **Q.Med** status with ADRIA/ADRIC and certificates in conflict resolution, change management, disability studies, and Indigenous Canada. Passionate about working with youth, Crystal also holds a competitive Level 2 Rhythmic Gymnastics certification.

LOOKING AHEAD

Youth Legacy is currently piloting its services in Airdrie, with plans to expand to Calgary and area. Aligned with Canada's Youth Justice Act, the project offers prevention, skill-building, and community support as positive alternatives to formal sentencing, especially in smaller communities.

Together, we are Youth Legacy, building stronger futures for youth.

The Youth Legacy Program is only possible through the funding from





Civil Society Fund





A STORY OF TRANSFORMATION:



Meet Matthew. At 21, he was stuck, unemployed, out of school, and unsure of his future. Referred to PMAST's Youth Legacy Program by Diversion Services of AHS, he discovered a spark through a simple conversation: "I kinda like doing animation."

With mentoring from Moose Abdel, CEO of Struggle Is Your Success, Matthew participated in PMAST's Communication and Conflict Management program and Struggle Is Your Success' Dream It, Plan It, Build It program. Through hands-on guidance, discussions, and encouragement, he learned to step out of his comfort zone, make deliberate choices, and pursue his passions with confidence.

Six months later, Matthew turned his interest in animation into a career and is now helping other at-risk youth find their path through the program.

This is why PMAST and Struggle Is Your Success are such strong partners. Through Youth Legacy, they provide young people with the skills, mentorship, and support to turn their dreams into reality and build brighter futures.

TESTIMONIAL

"Programs like PMAST are essential. They don't just teach skills – they transform lives.

I was particularly struck by the outcome you had previously shared of the Calgary Young

Offender Centre, where youth who complete the program leave with a renewed sense of
purpose and direction. The fact that staff have observed a noticeable reduction in conflict
following the program speaks volumes about its impact.

PMAST is creating safe spaces for youth to grow, reflect, and plan for their futures. ripple effects of this work – on families, communities, and institutions – are immeasurable. The outcomes speak for themselves, and the need is undeniable."

- Ibinabo Akinbode, Founder, IAMWHOLE Outreach Team

"PMAST's Youth Legacy project has become an integral part of our Airdrie cityscape. It effectively breaks down barriers between organizations by building a "Village". PMAST works in the community to help connect and assist at-risk youth with the resources they need to rebalance their lives. Thumbs Up is honored to collaborate with Youth Legacy in assisting youth, either by referrals from them or by requesting their support when our clients would benefit from their programs. We especially value their involvement in the neuroscientific workshops we have presented on 'The Brain Story,' and that their partner in Youth Legacy, Struggle Is Your Success, is certified. The work we do together is essential in creating resilience and hope in helping youth build successful futures. "

- Kim Titus, Chair and Founder, Thumbs Up

"These programs have been a successful collaboration with Corrections by SIYS and PMAST, working together to provide the youth and women with knowledge, skills and abilities that will help them move towards a pro-social future.

The youth and women presented their business ideas, shared their passion and developed public speaking skills... We look forward to continuing this program at CYOC & Female Annex for many years to come."

- the Calgary Young Offender Centre & Adult Female Annex

PMAST'S WALL OF FAME

BOB LANG - HONOREE



Bob Lang has been awarded the title of PMAST Board Director, Emeritus.

Bob Lang was a supporter of the original idea to work with youth in 1998, when he sat on the Board of Community Mediation Calgary Society. The society focused on providing volunteer mediation services to neighbourhood disputes, by-law offenders, and not-for-profit organizations. As the focus was quite different from CMCS, Bob suggested that the youth anti-bullying component be a special project of CMCS, and so it began.

With the success of the pilot, it became evident that a separate entity would be required. Bob once again stepped up and established a not-for-profit organization called PMAST, which was incorporated in Alberta and received CRA status as a registered charity in January 2003. Since its inception, Bob has held executive positions continuously. Bob is stepping back after 25 years, but will remain on the board, and we honor him for his foresight, his dedication, his guidance, and his leadership to PMAST.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Our main events surround fundraising. PMAST strives to make our programs accessible to participants, especially given that school budgets are already stretched to the limit. Our goal has always been to ensure our programs are not just for those who can afford them; we need to ensure all youth have the opportunity to gain the skills to be the best they can be.

This requires a significant amount of fundraising to develop the programs and hire exceptional trainers, ultimately ensuring we achieve a high standard of excellence. We submit many funding applications, with varying success.

We have been fortunate this year, not only with the Federal and Provincial funding for our Youth Legacy Project, but also with the following donations:



\$7,500 from Calgary Northmount Kiwanis for their many years of support for programs at Calgary and area schools, including Nelson Mandela High School for the newest refugee and immigrant students, and Prairie Waters School in Chestermere.

These Kiwanians include PMAST in their activities, help man our casinos and we thank them for helping us to do what we do.



\$10,000 from The Calgary Foundation for strategic planning and re-organization.



\$3,000 from ATB for programs at Prairie Waters School

We also had a casino in January 2024, which brought in another \$79,904 (which has to last for 18 months)



One of our primary fundraising campaigns is the Birdies for Kids Campaign, held in conjunction with the Shaw Charity Classic PGA Championship Golf Tournament, which takes place annually at Canyon Meadows. The funds we raise at our events and through donations are channelled through our Birdies for Kids Campaign, which nets us back an additional 50%, making it a great way to make those dollars count.

This year, we raised \$27,500 during the campaign, which nets us back \$37,302 to support programs for children and youth. Raising these funds involved personal donations from several individuals, as well as contributions from Co-operators Insurance and numerous donations of services and merchandise to our Great Alberta Adventure Charity Auction.

PMAST's Annual Great Alberta Adventure Charity Auction:

This online auction is held in July and appears to grow in popularity each year. It's a great way to purchase tickets, event passes, and gift certificates for various events, activities, golf, curling, music, dining, and merchandise at a great price.

PMAST would like to recognize the amazing donors to our auction who make it such a success every year. We couldn't do it without you!

(see next page for auction donors)

Peer Mediation And Skills Training would like to thank the following donors for their generous contributions to

THE GREAT ALBERTA ADVENTURE CHARITY AUCTION

















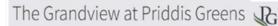






























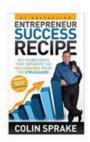








MOUNTONO BANFF SPRINGS













DREAM. DARE. DO...!
with
DONNA P. DANE, Author, Editor





FINANCIAL

PEER MEDIATION AND SKILLS TRAINING

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS (Audited)

For the Twelve Month Period Ended March 31, 2025

	General 2025	Casino 2025	Totals 2025	Totals 2024
REVENUES	£ 270 402		e 270 402	e 450.000
Grant (Note 4)	\$ 276,102	\$ -	\$ 276,102	\$ 158,966
Fundraising	37,303	-	37,303	9,978
Donations	10,997	-	10,997	4,130
Program	9,500	-	9,500	- 400
Interest Income	2,668	504	3,172	106
Contribution from Casino	-	79,907	79,907	\$ -
	336,570	80,411	416,981	173,180
EXPENSES				
Program	96,764	845	97,609	21,928
Contract service	67,261	18,681	85,942	64,844
Professional fees	44,500	_	44,500	60,814
Computer and website	26,229	_	26,229	28,523
Board development	17,879	-	17,879	6,943
Administrative	17,608	1,500	19,108	30,696
Advertising and promotion	12,618	_	12,618	7,278
Insurance	11,030	_	11,030	14,145
Meeting and workshops	5,726	-	5,726	6,649
Miscellaneous	2,744	-	2,744	-
Travel	1,645	-	1,645	535
Telephone	498	538	1,036	966
Bank charge and interest	58	5	63	2
	304,560	21,569	326,129	243,323
(DECDEACE) INCDEACE IN FUND				
(DECREASE) INCREASE IN FUND	£ 22.042	A 50.040 A		C (70.440)
BALANCES	\$ 32,010	\$ 58,842	90,852	\$ (70,143)

VOLUNTEERS

THE HEART OF PMAST

PMAST is powered by the dedication of our volunteers and supporters. From our Board of Directors, who handle day-to-day operations without paid staff, to everyone who bids in our auctions, attends events, purchases tickets, donates, or spreads the word, together, you make our mission possible. Thank you!

HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

- Become a volunteer or board member
- Help promote PMAST or raise funds
- Connect us to your employer's community giving program
- Donate items for our auction
- Try your hand at stand-up comedy (we'll train you!)
- Sign up for our mailing list and share our news
- Help bring our programs to schools
- Work at our casino events
- Make a donation

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU:

- Contribute to a cause you care about in a meaningful way
- Gain valuable skills and expand your network
- Connect with your community and its needs
- Teach your children about community service
- Give back and meet a dedicated, motivated group of people



THANK YOU TO OUR BOARD MEMBERS:

Brenda Christie
Elizabeth Bennett
Bob Lang
Jonathan Chan
Laaraib Sohail
Sania D'Silva
Tim Lipp
Rose Asgharzadeh
Veronica Lopez Matheu
Salman Al Outa

And a special thank you to our long-time Program Director, Florence Lye, for consistently ensuring excellence in our programs and training.







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NOTES: