



# ALBERTA YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CAMP FINAL REPORT 2016

2016

## A partnership of 10 Community Futures offices

The Final Report of the 20<sup>th</sup> annual AYEC

Submitted by: Joel Higgins (Camp Coordinator)

# ALBERTA YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CAMP FINAL REPORT 2016

A PARTNERSHIP OF 10 COMMUNITY FUTURES OFFICES

## CAMP OVERVIEW

2016 marked the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the annual Alberta Youth Entrepreneurship Camp.

The Alberta Youth Entrepreneurship Camp (AYEC) is a week-long leadership and entrepreneurship camp for 70 youth ages 12–18 (60 Campers, 10 Youth Leaders) that is held at Eagles Nest Ranch in the beautiful Cypress Hills. During their time at camp the youth engage in teamwork and collaboration to create an idea for a business and then go on to learn how to make that idea into a tangible product that they then sell for actual money during the last day of camp (Business Day).

Throughout the week of camp, they are instructed by experienced industry professionals on all the tenets of running a business. This includes things like creating a business name, figuring out cash-flows, doing market analysis and even customer service. They are guided along the way with engaging games like “The Lemonade Game” wherein they are given supplies and then instructed on how to create the most attractive business that sells lemonade. In order to create their business products, they often need supplies. They purchase these supplies on a trip into Medicine Hat where they are able to spend the loan-money that they applied for from real-life bankers on the Wednesday of camp (Banker’s Day).

In addition to the technical instruction of camp they are also engaged in some challenging outdoor activities that include rock-climbing, zip-lining, scavenger hunts and paintball. There were also social activities such as Camp’s Got Talent (a talent show of all the campers), campfire sing-alongs, movie night and other ice-breaker activities.

On the final day of camp (Business Day), the youth are set up in a tradeshow-style fashion to sell their products to their friends and family that have shown up to encourage and support their camper. Each of the 10 teams this year made money with even the lowest-earning team taking home over \$26.00 each! (The highest scoring team made nearly \$100 a piece!)

### Attendance Numbers

A breakdown of the Participant numbers is as follows.

- 57 Campers (ages 13 to 15). One camper was unable to attend and 2 went home early due to unforeseen circumstances
- 10 Youth Leaders (past Campers ages 16 to 18)
- 10 Team Leaders (adult volunteers aged 19 and up)
- 10 “Bankers” for Servus Credit Union for
- 9 Volunteers (adults ages 19+ attending camp for partial-time as well as the full week)

The Participants of the AVEC come from many different cities in Alberta and Saskatchewan. This year was the second year that the clubs of Rotary District 5360 were engaged to be sponsors for the AVEC. This year we had fewer Rotary clubs than last year support AVEC. We believe that this was due to a smaller amount of funding available caused by the downturn in our economy. Also, our call for sponsorship was later in the year and many clubs had already set their sponsorship budgets and voted on where that funding would go. None-the-less, we still had 10 Rotary Clubs sponsor 14 campers –only 3 fewer than last year – and we are still extremely grateful for their support. We had a total of 20 Volunteers plus Ken Pidwerbesky (our new Camp Medic) that stayed for all or part of camp. Also new this year, we had Nora Bassingthwaight, an employee with Medicine Hat Family Services and a Masters student in psychology and counselling. Nora was brought in as a camp counsellor for any type of mental health issues at camp. A service never offered at AVEC, but one that has been considered necessary. Although there were no major issues, Nora’s expertise was utilized in a number of situations possibly thwarting any larger issues. Everyone was extremely grateful to have her there.

## Review of Facilities

As in all previous years, the AVEC was held at Eagles Nest Ranch (ENR), located in the Cypress Hills of Southern Alberta. ENR is the best venue for the AVEC as it is not only familiar to a majority of the Participants, but it also provides the perfect environment needed to run a successful camp. The accommodations, recreation activities and main hall are all ideal for the mission of the AVEC. ENR made some noticeable improvements of facilities this year. There was an entirely new ENR staff this year, so they weren't familiar with AVEC. There were obviously assumptions of understanding by both parties at first, but it was overall a wonderful experience with wonderful staff. The only issue we had the entire week was the projector in the main hall at ENR failed on the first day, and they were unable to replace it during our camp. We reconciled this issue by displaying some presentations on a TV screen which helped, but wasn't ideal. Overall it was another great year.

The overwhelming request by campers is to bring back the pool. Eagles Nest Ranch has a swimming pool that currently needs a renovation at the cost of roughly \$100,000. In the past, this has been a recreational activity that the campers have had access to. The kids all see this pool closed off and empty every day and obviously wish it was full. Other popular requests were to bring back horseback riding, archery and have earlier bed times (we found this extremely surprising!).

## Participant Evaluations

All Campers and Youth Leaders were reviewed by their respective supervisors and received an overall positive evaluation. A majority of them would be welcomed back to camp in subsequent years (provided they are eligible). All Participants were encouraged to fill out a survey for camp that indicated their level of satisfaction, what they enjoyed and what they would like to see improved. Results are on the next page.

## CAMPERS

A total of 56 campers completed surveys.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- 100% of campers surveyed said they would recommend AVEC to their friends
- All metrics in the survey received a majority rating of either “good” or “excellent”
- Highest rated was “Staff helpfulness and support” with a score of 3.7 out of 5.0
- Lowest was “Washrooms” with an average score of 3.3 out of 5.0
- 16 Campers expressed interest in becoming Youth Leaders

## YOUTH LEADERS

The Youth leaders all went through a new Youth Leader Training process over three days prior to camp. This was modified and improved on the basis of the previous training curriculum and was delivered by Jason Openo, Manager of Teaching at the Medicine Hat College. The Youth Leaders had extremely positive reviews of both Jason and the new curriculum. It was noticeable that the training proved useful at camp as the Youth Leaders did an amazing job. All of the evaluations of the Youth Leaders were positive.

## VOLUNTEERS

This year we had an abnormally low level of Volunteers due to unforeseen circumstances. This issue was overcome by volunteers taking on extra responsibilities. Even though we were stressed for help, all volunteers that were surveyed responded positively about their experiences with AVEC. We also had 4 volunteers who had never attended AVEC before including one volunteering on behalf of Rotary. All Volunteers responded that this was a great experience.

The biggest issue noted by the Volunteer Surveys is that the module presentations can be improved on. Specifically, how they line up with the Camper Manuals that the youth work on during the module presentations. This is something that is improved on year-after-year, but a suggestion is to focus on improving this part of camp for future years. Many of the campers return to camp as many times as they can and they become very familiar with the material.

## GUEST SPEAKERS

The purpose of the guest speaker event is to showcase a story of success and entrepreneurship. This year we had Kurtis Albers of Kickoff Your Brand, a brand consulting agency he founded recently. He shared the story of his past as a Canadian Champion football athlete and how it inspired him to become an entrepreneur. He has founded a number of start-ups, including a break-dance studio and he showcased that he “can still get down”. His message was to “make your business remarkable” and his theatrical and entertaining presentation seemed to resonate with the youth to help them understand the importance of a strong brand. When surveyed about the most important thing in business, the majority of campers responded “marketing” and “make your business remarkable”.

### Curriculum Overview

As the manuals and workbooks have continued to be updated, there are still some areas that can be worked on to help make the curriculum flow smoother. Some common remarks by presenters and Team Leaders were that when followed exactly, the presentation outline for some modules was too long, and not consistent with workbooks. It was proposed to modify some of the presentations to make them more exciting in the future years. As mentioned previously, a number of the kids return year after year and become familiar with presentation material. For future years, it would be worth updating some of these modules to provide groups with more time to complete business plans, work on business products and fill out their workbooks.

### Business Team Financials

10 business teams (each consisting of 1 Team Leader, 1 Youth Leader and 6 Campers) created products that they sold on Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, also known as Business Day (the final day of camp). As in previous years, each team was profitable and every Camper earned money.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

Below are listed the Business Team numbers, their earnings and the products they created and sold.

- 1.\$188.10 (Nature Held Captive – Wine bottle birdfeeders, key chains and coasters)
- 2.\$283.50 (Tie It Dye It Buy It – Tie dye hoodies, bracelets and gourmet popcorn)
- 3.\$257.95 (Flour Power – brownie & cookie dry mix/ flowers in pots)
- 4.\$301.00 (Memory Lane – Yearbooks)
- 5.\$300.00 (Nature Intertwined – Cacti plants and intertwined bracelets)
- 6.\$194.55
- 7.\$158.00 (To Dye for – Ty Dye Shirts)
- 8.\$301.40 (Infinite Survival – Back to school kits & car survival kits)
- 9.\$250.00 (Boards & Balls – 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary wooden coasters/plaques and stress balls)
- 10.\$500.61 (Soak n’ Safety– Homemade bath bombs, salts and scrubs and para–cord survival bracelets)

## TOTAL: \$2,735

- Total earnings for all 10 Business Teams: \$2,735.11
- Average earnings for each Business Team: \$273.51
- Highest grossing Business Team (Team 10): \$500.61

## Sponsors and Partners

This year’s camp was made possible, once again, through the generous donations of many sponsors. This year we were fortunate to receive our full budget through sponsorship and reserves, but acquiring sponsorship was a little more difficult this year. To improve on sponsorship attraction moving forward, it is recommended that AYEC’s strategic sponsorship attraction be reviewed. Timelines, targets and outreach strategies played a factor in lower sponsorship this year, but was not a major issue, as we were not under–budget at the end of the day.

A breakdown of these sponsors, along with a list of participating Community Futures offices is on the next page.

## **PARTICIPATING COMMUNITY FUTURES OFFICES**

- Central Alberta – Red Deer
- Centre West – Cochrane
- East Parkland – Mirror
- Entre-Corp – Medicine Hat
- Alberta Southwest – Pincher Creek
- Highwood – Okotoks
- Chinook – Taber
- Meridian – Kindersley, Saskatchewan
- Wildrose – Strathmore
- Crowsnest Pass – Blairmore

## **CORPORATE AND LOCAL BUSINESS SPONSORS**

- Alberta Human Services
- Vitreous Glass Inc.
- Servus Credit Union
- YPM Chartered Accountants
- Medicine Hat Chamber of Commerce
- Simply Water
- Mr. E's Solve-It-Torium
- Gryzkoharperbouw Chartered Accountants
- Bragg Creek Chamber of Commerce

## **ROTARY CLUBS OF DISTRICT 5360**

- Calgary (Heritage Park)
- Calgary West
- Calgary (South)
- Calgary
- Cochrane
- Canmore
- Medicine Hat Rotary Club
- Medicine Hat (Sunrise)
- Okotoks
- High River

The four levels of sponsorship we used this year are:

- Platinum: \$10,000+
- Gold: \$5,000 – \$9,999
- Silver: \$2,500 – \$4,999
- Bronze: \$1,000 – \$2, 499

Our biggest sponsor this year was Alberta Human Services (formerly Alberta Works) which, once again, made the AVEC possible with their sizeable donation of \$25,000

Sponsors were recognized for their support in a variety of forms. Two sponsor boards were displayed at ENR during the award ceremony (one for participating Rotary Clubs and the other sign for all other sponsors). Each appropriate sponsor's logo was also displayed on this year's AVEC T-Shirts as well as other corresponding methods of recognition.

### Concerns and Adjustments

Every year at camp, there are always risks for injury and sickness. Adjustments to policy have helped to prevent injury and sickness, but it is always something we will have to prepare for with such a large number of people in such a small group.

This year we had a particularly unique case of a camper testing positive for Mononucleosis (Mono) virus while at camp. This was discovered early on and the camper unfortunately was confined to a bunk room until the camper was able to be picked up from camp and send home. This was necessary as Mono is spread through saliva, making it contagious. All parents of children who attended camp were given a letter explaining that this had happened, as it was necessary to communicate that their child could possibly have been exposed to this virus. So far we have not heard of any others who attended AVEC contracting the virus.

## Conclusion

The 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AYEC was an amazing success. The data we have received from the 20 Year Assessment has shown us the incredible impact this camp has on the Youth. The feedback from the surveys and evaluations shows such positive results year after year, with this year particularly positive.

AYEC is again thankful of all the sponsorship and volunteer support, without which it couldn't be possible to make this camp happen, especially at no cost to the camper. We are excited to start preparations for next year's camp and we look forward to another great year.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Higgins  
Camp Coordinator  
Alberta Youth Entrepreneurship Camp