



Canadian Public  
Relations Society  
Edmonton Society

# **ANNUAL REPORT** 2019 – 2020



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT: EMBRACING THE FUTURE

Lyn Brown



For CPRS Edmonton, 2019-20 was a year of disruption through which we steered a steady course guided by tenacity and resilience.

As host city of National conference last June, local advisory chair Cecilia Bloxom, MA, APR, ABC, FCPRS and the host team were forced to move the venue twice and the date once. Our chapter board said goodbye to longstanding directors in Programming, Mentorship and Communications, took an extended summer hiatus, and transitioned the Treasurer portfolio twice before Christmas. Despite encouragement, promotion and willing local mentors, Accreditation was unable to attract any eligible members to the process for the second consecutive year. And, we saw the impact of shifting academic priorities and budget pressures at post-secondary institutions take a toll on CPRS faculty and student membership.

Through it all, the chapter board rallied. We pieced together institutional

memory in the handover of portfolio files, a laptop, Google Drive and Dropbox folders. We amended our bylaws, kept our finances solid, adopted digital banking and bookkeeping, and dedicated leadership talent to social events, learning programs and conversation circles that brought us together as a community of professionals.

The experience of this turbulent year was a clear reminder of how important it is for public relations professionals to be flexible, future-oriented, and always driven to discover the FUN in shared purpose.

Looking to the year ahead, we intend to focus on innovation and experimentation. This direction is based, in part, on comments gathered in answer to the “existential” question we posed in January.

What purpose does CPRS Edmonton serve for members and community? It’s a simple question that revealed the rich diversity of interests and perspectives in our chapter. Some who responded yearned for a year-long PD calendar, but there was no consensus on topics, time or place. Some spoke of salon sessions to tap the knowledge and experience of those in the room to “crowdsource” ideas and solutions to business, stakeholder and organization issues. Others leaned to legacy and a mission of community service in the broader sense.

Against this backdrop of variety, two things are constant. One, our chapter

board will carry on in 2020-21 with the same passion and commitment as chapter leaders before. Two, we will go boldly forward to seek out different ways to create connections digitally, virtually, nationally and socially. Stay tuned!

I want to extend heartfelt gratitude to Cecilia Bloxom, MA, APR, ABC, FCPRS for her wise and constant support to our chapter for nearly a decade. Our deep appreciation also goes to Tadra Boulton, APR who dedicated many years of leadership to the Accreditation portfolio. Thanks also to Kathleen Van Dusen, Sharon Sush and Christopher Schieman who gave time to our chapter during this year of transition. I would also like to say thank you to Oscar Cruz for his great design work throughout the year.

A wonderful team has stepped up to lead CPRS Edmonton – Crystal Wood, APR (president-elect), Peter Haight (communications), Narith Hang (treasurer), Melanie Houley (membership), Gwendoline Hunka (director at large), and Michelle Mondeville (secretary). We’ll be streamlining governance, embracing digital, and sharing a full calendar of programming with you soon.

Stay well,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lyn Brown".

Lyn Brown, ABC, MBA, ICD.D





*CPRS 2019-2020 Board Left to Right: Crystal Wood, APR, (Vice-President), Tadra Boulton, APR, (Accreditation), Melanie Houley, (Membership), Peter Haight, (Communications), Kathleen van Dusen, Gwendoline Hunka, (Director at large), Lyn Brown, (President), Christopher Schieman, Cecilia Bloxom, MA, APR, ABC, FCPRS (Past-President)*

## COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

**Peter Haight**

Behind every success, you can find good communication. As communicators, we hold our colleagues to the highest standards because we understand the difference they can make.

The 2019-2020 year focused on getting CPRS Edmonton's communications back on track with regular communication with its members and showcasing the value that a CPRS membership can bring. At the local level, this included networking opportunities, professional development and careers. Nationally,

it included making sure members were aware of some of the opportunities available like webinars, the CPRS awards programs and other volunteer opportunities.

Towards the end of the 2019-2020 year, communicators were faced with the challenges brought on by the global COVID-19 pandemic. When it was declared, we made sure our communications were focused on making members aware of resources available to them through their membership. As Edmonton recovers

from the crisis, we will continue to support our members through the uncertain times ahead.

As we move into 2020-2021, our communications will match our theme of innovation and experimentation. We will try new ways to engage in open, timely, two-way dialogue with our members. If you want to volunteer or provide feedback, suggestions or ideas, feel free to reach out.

**[communications@cprsedmonton.ca](mailto:communications@cprsedmonton.ca)**

# 2020 BOARD REPORT– PROGRAMMING

Crystal Wood, APR

We kicked off the board year's programming with a mixer called Last Call Before Fall at the end of September. This was our biggest event of the year and attracted more than 40 guests, many of which were students.

In October, we held two events. A mentorship event allowed junior communicators the opportunity to ask questions of PR practitioners about their careers. Communications leaders in Edmonton shared their professional tips and expertise. We also invited CPRS members to a coffee discussion about accreditation.

In November, we hosted a panel of communicators who discussed public relations ethics in relation to brand journalism, crisis management and technology.

In December, we hosted a Jingle and Mingle mixer at a local brewery.

Aside from our September event, our guest participation in events was low, typically about 10 to 15 people, and we began to see more non-members participating than members. This led us to question our professional development value, and host event early in the new year to discuss our concerns with our members. Unfortunately, we did not have strong participation in this event. The conversation highlighted a few points:

- Our value to Edmonton may be as a profession advocate and partner, rather than just member professional development

- Members seem to value social opportunities and experiences more than traditional professional development formats (lectures, presentations)
- Low member engagement will result in significant change to our delivery model and chapter management

Because of COVID-19, we paused our events for spring and will hold our AGM virtually. We need a quorum of 13, and plan to attract guests with a presentation about the COVID-19 impact on relationships from a nationally renowned communicator.





# MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Melanie Houley

In last year's annual report, I reflected on how since 1963, CPRS Edmonton has endeavoured to provide the support needed for our members to become change leaders ready to pivot and meet new workplace realities. Those words ring even more true today in the time of COVID-19 where communicators all over the world have stepped up to provide leadership and guidance for our organizations and communities. We have been called upon to be the calm, factual voices needed to effectively, ethically and empathetically communicate while navigating new technology and working remotely.

To support our members during this time, we created a COVID-19 resource centre on [cprs.ca](http://cprs.ca) and hosted free webinars filled with pragmatic information to help us each communicate with confidence. As communicators, we often work in the background and our departments are not always recognized as core essential services, yet the work we do strategically enables our organizations to build trust, relationships and maintain a positive reputation. For this reason, it is vital we support each other and one of the benefits of a CPRS membership is joining a community of global practitioners who

work together to raise the standards of our profession while supporting each other. Something we saw in action during the pandemic as communicators rallied together to share collective knowledge—together we were stronger.

In the upcoming 2020-2021 year, our membership goals include continuing to foster that community network, to pivot to new economic realities post lock-down and to provide learning and discussion opportunities for all career stages. To this end, Gwen Hunka, current Director at Large, will be joining me in a larger portfolio to help steward our student and early career members.

## 2019-2021 Highlights

The CPRS Edmonton Chapter proudly congratulates CPRS Edmonton member and past President, Cecilia Bloxom, MA, APR, ABC, FCPRS on her 2019 induction to the 2019 College of Fellows. Since 2000, the College of Fellows has acknowledged CPRS members who are proven leaders in the public relations and communications profession and Cecilia embodies those qualities as a tireless advocate and champion for our industry. Congratulations Cecilia!

CPRS Edmonton is now proud to boast:

- 25 Accredited Public Relations (APR) professionals
- three Life Members with over 30+ years' experience
- seven members of the CPRS College of Fellows (FCPRS) for those with 20+ years' experience.
- 50 per cent of our members are senior level with 10+ years' experience.

The 2019-2021 year saw a slight decrease in CPRS Edmonton's membership numbers most likely due to tougher economic times within our geographic region.

As always, a sincere thank you for your membership and for making our chapter stronger.

	2019-2021	2018-2019
Current Members	132	143
Lapsed Members (past 12 months)	53	39

# ACHIEVING THE ACCREDITED IN PUBLIC RELATIONS (APR)® DESIGNATION

**Tadra Boulton, APR**

Accreditation with the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS), is a voluntary certification program and a respected measure of professional experience and competency in the field of public relations.

The designation, administered by CPRS, distinguishes you as being committed to the highest professional standards.

The year-long process is a measure of the extent of your practical experience and competence in the field. To be eligible, you must:

- be employed full-time in a public relations position or have owned your own public relations business for at least five years;

- spend at least half of your professional time involved with specific public relations activities; and
- be a member in good standing of the Canadian Public Relations Society.

Once accepted, candidates may choose to study on their own, connect with resources offered through the national office and website or work with the Edmonton Accreditation Chair who can offer support through study groups or one-on-one consultation.

The program involves a rigorous evaluation of the skills and competencies needed to practice public relations at a senior level and establishes standards

for professional practice. It measures experience and strategic thinking, not specific academic knowledge; however, it is necessary to have a foundational knowledge of public relations theory and policy issues to achieve Accreditation.


The CPRS Edmonton Chapter accreditation Chair supports public relations professionals who are interested in pursuing the APR designation. The chair can help with questions, the application process, studying and exam preparation.

For further information, contact [accreditation@cprsedmonton.ca](mailto:accreditation@cprsedmonton.ca) or visit [cprsedmonton.ca/accreditation](http://cprsedmonton.ca/accreditation)

The application deadline is December 1 each year.





A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of several modern skyscrapers with glass facades. The buildings are partially obscured by a semi-transparent grey overlay that contains the text. The sky is a uniform grey, and the overall tone is professional and serious.

**"The experience of this turbulent year was a clear reminder of how important it is for public relations professionals to be flexible, future-oriented, and always driven to discover the FUN in shared purpose."**

Lyn Brown, President CPRS, Edmonton

# EDMONTON HOSTS THE NATIONAL CPRS CONFERENCE: EVOLVING EXPECTATIONS

Cecilia Bloxom, MA, APR, ABC, FCPRS



What a conference! After more than a year of planning and hard work by a team of passionate volunteers in Edmonton and across Alberta, the 2019 CPRS National Conference, Evolving Expectations, was held from June 16 - 18, and by all accounts, far exceeded our delegates' expectations.

For three days, hundreds of practitioners from across the country met for a dynamic program of keynotes, panels and breakout sessions, combined with a ton of Festival City inspired networking events and activities, all aimed at better preparing us for the Evolving Expectations of today's profession.

Thank you to everyone who played a part in making the 2019 CPRS National conference unforgettable.

Evolving Expectations was made possible by countless volunteers who dedicated hours of time and energy to make it happen.





**Cecilia Bloxom, MA, APR, ABC, FCPRS**  
**Evolving Expectations**  
**Advisory Committee Chair**



**Mike Lupien,**  
**Sponsorship Chair**  
**Committee:** Dana Myckan,  
 Jim Rudolph, Bernie Poitras



**Darlene Dickinson,**  
**Volunteer Chair**  
**Committee:** Crystal Wood, APR,  
 Carrie Rosa, Sharon Hawrelak



**Danielle Alfaro**



**Maria Michailides,**  
**Events and Hospitality Chair**  
**Committee:** Martin Schuldhaus,  
 Natasha Thathiah, Bev Purpur,  
 Caroline Missal, Gerhard Kruschke



**Diane Begin**



**Leslie Beard,**  
**Communications and Marketing Chair**  
**Committee:** Amy Beard,  
 Mary McIntyre, Ronna Bremer



**Michelle James**



**Scott Winder, Programming Chair**  
**Committee:** Dan Costigan,  
 Shani Gwin, Katherine Green,  
 Kathleen van Dusen, Dan VanKeeken



The Evolving Expectations Conference is a year behind us and we know your contributions as a volunteer help us achieve great results! Thank you again for all that you did to make the delegates feel welcomed. Thank you again for all that you did to make the delegates feel welcomed and to provide an unforgettable experience for them. We hope that you too had an opportunity to make some lifelong connections and enjoy the stellar program.

## VOLUNTEERS

Stuart Adams

Peter Haight

Samantha Moore

Luis Carlos Flores Aguilar

Mairon Haile

Derrick Pieters

Jake Anders

Sharon Hawrelak

Ellen Reade

Maxine Brodeur

Marjorie Henderson

Jessica Robb

Diane Carter

Mike Henriksen

Kinia Romanowska

Andrea Collins

Catherine Hoac

Carrie Rosa

Freddie Cruz Jr.

Gwendoline Hunka

Lisa Rushka

Tiffany Efird

Kimberlee Jones

Chris Scheiman

Micky Elabdi

Esther Kruschke

Sarah van Dusen

Danica Erickson

Barb LeFort

Tamara Vineberg

Abraham Fawaz

Jeremy Lukan

Denise Williamson

Jerid Fish

Sarah Martin

Crystal Wood, APR

Chelsea Ganter

Karen Meurer

Evan Gyulai

Marianna Michalitsianou



# CECILIA BLOXOM NAMED TO CPRS COLLEGE OF FELLOWS

Written By the Canadian Patient Safety Institute



The Canadian Patient Safety Institute's Cecilia Bloxom, MA, APR, ABC, FCPRS, Senior Director of Strategic Communications, has been named to the Canadian Public Relations Society College of Fellows, a pinnacle of achievement for members of the Society.

College of Fellow members have at least 20 years of professional experience and at least 10 years of Society involvement. They have demonstrated that they are leaders in the public relations profession, but also have demonstrated outstanding leadership in CPRS. Fellows devote their time and undertake tasks that advance the state of public relations in Canada, including mentoring others,

speaking and writing about the value of effective public relations and being involved in other College initiatives.

"Cecilia's career has flourished over the last two decades as she has consistently challenged herself to grow her skills to become a dynamic and well-respected communications professional," says Chris Power, CEO, Canadian Patient Safety Institute. "She is constantly looking toward the next big challenge and accomplishment, while providing inspiration to her team and peers. Her unwavering commitment to improve patient safety is evident in the campaigns she has spearheaded and the issues she has tackled. She has the unique ability to bring together diverging opinions and ensure people feel heard, respected and valued, leading to successful outcomes for everyone involved."

An award winning Senior Communications Professional with 20 years of experience in regional, provincial and national organizations, Cecilia is highly skilled in developing and landing memorable strategic plans, creating lasting brands, and routinely building awareness on a

national level. She is one of a few hundred communicators in Canada with dual accreditation from both the International Association of Business Communicators and the Canadian Public Relations Society. Cecilia is a true leader in the Communications industry with a solid background in leadership development, including a Masters of Arts in Leadership from Royal Roads University.

Cecilia has a solid understanding of Governance, supporting the Canadian Patient Safety Institute's national Board of Directors, serving as the current Past President of the Canadian Public Relations Society (Edmonton), current Director on the CPRS Foundation Board (formerly Communications + Public Relations Foundation), and past Director with the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts. Over the past 10 years, Cecilia has shared advice, experience and guidance as a mentor to protégés in the CPRS mentorship program. Cecilia also chaired the Local Advisory Committee for the Canadian Public Relations Society National Conference, Evolving Expectations, welcoming over 300 delegates to Edmonton in June 2019. Congratulations, Cecilia!

# 2020 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

## ASSETS

<b>CURRENT</b>			
Cash	\$	31,252	\$ 32,756
Accounts receivable		-	206
Goods and services tax recoverable		-	318
Prepaid expenses		100	-
	\$	31,352	\$ 33,280

## LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<b>CURRENT</b>			
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$	1,724	\$ 2,375
Goods and services tax payable		48	-
		1,772	2,375
<b>NET ASSETS - UNRESTRICTED</b>		<b>29,580</b>	<b>30,905</b>
	\$	31,352	\$ 33,280

Statement of Operations  
Year Ended March 31, 2020  
(Unaudited - See Notice To Reader)

	2020	2019
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Membership dues	\$ 5,620	\$ 5,734
Professional development events	2,082	6,355
Student memberships	-	960
	7,702	13,049
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Professional development	4,381	6,675
Professional fees	1,800	1,800
Insurance	1,523	361
Communication	697	3,055
Office and administration	529	614
Bank charges	97	30
	9,027	12,535
<b>(DEFICIENCY) EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ (1,325)</b>	<b>\$ 514</b>

Statement of Changes in Net Assets  
Year Ended March 31, 2020  
(Unaudited - See Notice To Reader)

	2020	2019
<b>NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 30,905</b>	<b>\$ 30,391</b>
<b>(DEFICIENCY) EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>(1,325)</b>	<b>514</b>
<b>NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 29,580</b>	<b>\$ 30,905</b>

On the basis of information provided by management, we have compiled the statement of financial position of Canadian Public Relations Society Edmonton as at March 31, 2020 and the statements of operations and changes in net assets for the year then ended.

We have not performed an audit or a review engagement in respect of these financial statements and, accordingly, we express no assurance thereon.

Readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes.

RSM Alberta LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants  
Edmonton, Alberta  
April 29, 2020





Canadian Public  
Relations Society

Edmonton Society

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