



2019-20 **Annual Report**



epic
opportunities

empowering
people in
community



VISION

Our vision is for all people to be valued members of the community, have significant personal networks, equal access to opportunities and to contribute to a better society.

MISSION

Epic Opportunities exists to provide holistic, person centred supports to people with intellectual disabilities and to promote inclusive communities.

VALUES

Being rooted in Christian tradition, Epic Opportunities believes that everyone has inherent value and a purpose to fulfill. Everyone is deserving of unconditional acceptance.

RESPECT

All people have a voice, deserve to be heard and treated with dignity.

PERSONAL GROWTH

Every person has the potential to live a rich and full life. We grow and achieve our highest potential when supports are available.

ADVOCACY

We are equally valuable in society and deserving of basic human rights and freedoms.

RELATIONSHIPS

Quality of life is improved when people have genuine connections with others.

INTEGRITY

We are honest, accountable and follow through on our commitments.

INCLUSION

Diversity, opportunity and value for all people contribute to stronger communities, enrich people's lives and are the foundation for a better world.

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***Empowering People
In Community***

Epic Opportunities Board of Directors

The Board of Directors oversees the operations and management of Epic Opportunities, which exists to provide holistic, person-centred supports to people with intellectual disabilities and to promote inclusive communities.

The seven-member board is comprised of people who represent the community we serve as well as the community at large. For more information on the Epic Opportunities Board of Directors or on how to become involved contact Epic Opportunities at info@epicmb.ca or call **(204) 560-2804**.

2019-20 Board Members



Ruth-Ann Soodeen
President



Christina Reinke
Vice President



Michael Ramondi
Treasurer



Tanya Brothers
Director



Corin Frost
Director



Gregory Bryant
Director



Mark Mercier
Director

Epic Opportunities Foundation Board of Directors

The Epic Opportunities Foundation was officially established in 2011 as the primary fundraising body for Epic Opportunities. It is governed by a volunteer board of directors who represent the community we serve as well as the community at large.

For more information on the Epic Opportunities Foundation Board of Directors or on how to become involved contact Epic Opportunities at info@epicmb.ca or call **(204) 560-2804**.

2019-20 Board Members



Ralph Guy
President



Ron Wasylycia-Leis
Vice President



Mark Mercier
Treasurer



Raymond Currie
Director



Christina Reinke
Director



Ruth-Ann Soodeen
Director

Executive Director's Message

This year marked the conclusion of our five-year strategic plan which was rolled out in 2015.

It has been a remarkable journey with many major milestones reached. Now five years later we find ourselves in a world that none of us imagined when we began. So much has changed, the future is more uncertain and yet our foundation remains strong. Many successes have been achieved and many challenges have been faced but despite this we are grateful for all that has been accomplished. Most importantly we serve men and women who consistently inspire us and trust us to participate in their day-to-day experiences.

We are thankful for the strong support of so many stakeholders who believe in our vision for ALL people to be valued members of the community. Families and friends surround us and the people we serve with love, encouragement and compassion. As we face the trials of an unprecedented global pandemic, we need this now more than ever. We wish to offer you courage, hope and inspiration as we come to peace with the present. But we are also excited as we look to the next five years of service at Epic Opportunities.

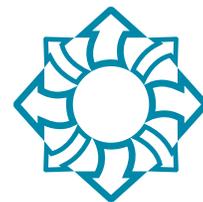
Reflecting on the past five years we are proud to say that we purchased five new homes for people we serve. In 2020 we purchased our latest new home in the River Heights area. Three men served by Epic Opportunities will move into this home in the near future. All of these homes became a reality through incredible support for the Make a House a Home campaign and the generous contributions from you, our supporters, at our annual An Evening with Epic fundraiser. This past year's event was once again a huge success. We hosted 200 guests and also received significant support from corporate sponsors in raising net proceeds of over \$72,000.

Other accomplishments during the past five years included the replacement of three commercial properties. In the case of our day

services this included a move from four locations to two newly renovated spaces at 250 Goulet St. and 1745 Portage Ave. With this transition we also expanded our emphasis on increased service in community settings thereby further reducing reliance on our own buildings as a gathering space. The move of our head office space from 1644 Dublin Ave. to 1600 Ness Ave. was also a major accomplishment. Our new space offers up many new opportunities because of its proximity to public transit and the Polo Park business hub. We also developed and implemented a more consistent plan to replace older vehicles in our fleet used to provide transportation services. We hosted two well-attended family barbecues in an effort to create more time to mix, mingle and enjoy time together. A new focus on mental health was initiated with two trained Mental Health First Aid facilitators at Epic Opportunities. A wellness event was hosted for people we serve to help bring awareness to holistic health and wellbeing. We also invested significantly in leadership development training. Our team is stronger as a result. These are just a few of the highlights that come to mind when we reflect on the conclusion of this five-year plan.

It is also important to note that over the past five years we developed a comprehensive database which most recently became integrated with our payroll system through Inclusion Systems. This integration gives our employees access to begin recording many aspects of service delivery electronically. This could not have come at a more appropriate time as the whole world is shifting to virtual platforms in response to the need for physical distancing and more remote access. One thing we learned with this project is that it will be ongoing. We have accomplished a lot but we also still have more work to do in this area. This investment will bring profound benefits to our work well into the future.

This past year Epic Opportunities was selected, after formally expressing interest, as a participant in a quality improvement pilot project led by Abilities Manitoba and our funder, Community Living disABILITY Services (CLdS). The goal of the project is to create a system to help understand and measure service-related quality improvements within the province



of Manitoba. We are thrilled to participate in this important work and see this as an excellent bridge to the creation of our next strategic plan at Epic Opportunities. Ultimately the reason we exist is to ensure that the people we serve experience positive and meaningful outcomes. We know this requires continuous progress for us as we offer to serve in our community. This project will inform us in this area and help us make any needed improvements.

Much of what we envisioned five years ago has come to be. We carried out our plan according to the road map we created. We also realize that no amount of planning really prepares you for all the twists and turns that life offers up. Today we have a whole new world in front of us. We embrace it despite the uncertainty. With this focus we are eager to start planning for the next years of our existence at Epic Opportunities. We see a new generation of self-advocates. More than ever people with lived disability experience are focused on human rights. People are finding their voice and speaking up. We are proud to walk alongside these amazing women and men. We hope to learn together about how to influence necessary change. We know and believe that together we can make the world a better place!

Ruby Reimer

Executive Director, Epic Opportunities

“WE ARE THANKFUL FOR THE STRONG SUPPORT OF SO MANY STAKEHOLDERS WHO BELIEVE IN OUR VISION FOR ALL PEOPLE TO BE VALUED MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY.” —Ruby Reimer, Executive Director

President's Message

March 2020 will always stand out as being one of the most unpredictable endings to an otherwise normal (but still exciting) year for Epic Opportunities.

I recall meeting with Executive Director Ruby Reimer for some board-related planning in March just as COVID-19 was hitting Manitoba. This was a time of considerable uncertainty, worry, and stress for everyone, and especially for Epic Opportunities. The greatest concern of course revolved around the potential impacts on the individuals we serve: how they would fare health-wise; how their daily activities and services might be affected; what would happen if their disability support workers (DSWs) were unable to work; how long this would last; and how bad things could get.

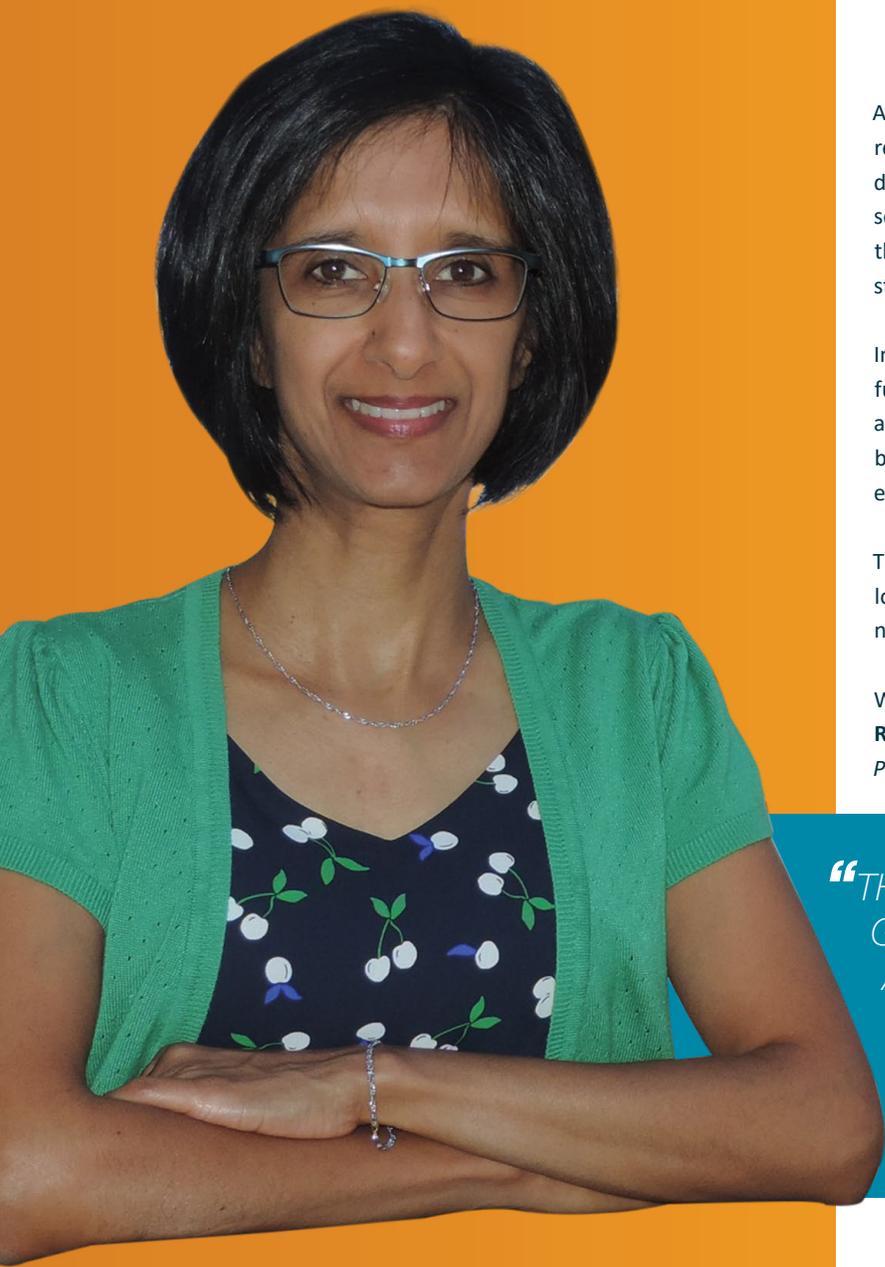
We had no answers, only questions. But everyone was in it together. Staff continued to show up for work, and while employment rates dropped around us, it increased at Epic Opportunities. A recruitment thrust was already underway in early March, and in the days that followed the “lockdown,” there was a surge in applications and new hirings.

Our board has been inspired by the dedicated frontline staff who push through their own fears to continue going out to the homes of the men and women they serve, and in some cases, were their main personal social connection during a time of isolating even from family. We heard how the Epic Opportunities leadership team worked with others in this sector to advocate for DSWs to receive PPEs and recognition as frontline workers. They also worked tirelessly with their teams to modify plans, rework old processes, set up new systems, and learn new tools to stay connected with each other, provide training to new staff, manage finances (especially as year-end approached), and keep things going as best they could.

Epic Opportunities staff truly live up to their name. They are Epic; they do not work for fame or fortune but to serve and to make our community a better place for all. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want you to know that we see you, we recognize your hard work, and we appreciate you for it.

It is hard to believe that we have already reached the final year of our five-year strategic plan. As you can read in Ruby's Executive Director's message, much has been accomplished over this period. Every component of the plan was designed to be person-centred and to guide Epic Opportunities in investing more in its employees, the men and women (and their families) it serves, its communities, and its partnerships. The first four years focused mainly on internal development strategies. With that firmly in place, we turned our attention this past year to deepening existing relationships and building new ones with external stakeholders and our community. Some of this happened through our regular day-to-day operations, and in fulfilling our responsibilities to our funder. Another exciting portion took place in partnership with the Epic Opportunities Foundation and our corporate sponsorship campaign; this started earlier in the strategic plan and has built momentum in the past year. We are pleased to have made more connections and to raise awareness of our organization and the important work we do.

Reaching Year Five of this plan does not mean that the work is complete. While we take the time in this report to recognize our successes thus far, we also acknowledge that there is still more to do to strengthen and advance that work. This will inform our next strategic plan, which the board together with Epic Opportunities leadership will develop over the next year. As part of this work, we will review our mission and vision to ensure that they are still relevant and connected with our core values. These statements serve as Epic Opportunities' compass and destination, and at board meetings are kept close at hand to ensure that our decisions align with them.



Another focus of the board is to ensure that its membership represents a diverse range and balance of skills, expertise and demographics. A recent review of these characteristics revealed some gaps that we will seek to fill over the next year or two as the opportunities arise. This will help make our strong team even stronger.

In closing, on behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you to our funder, sponsors, and friends for your continued support; your gifts are in good hands. The Epic Opportunities leadership team and the board are committed to using it to fulfill our mission in the most efficient, effective, and trustworthy manner possible.

This has been another year of growth, change, and progress, and I look forward to seeing what is in store for Epic Opportunities in the next year!

Warm regards,

Ruth-Ann Soodeen

President, Epic Opportunities Board of Directors

“THIS HAS BEEN ANOTHER YEAR OF GROWTH, CHANGE, AND PROGRESS, AND I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING WHAT IS IN STORE FOR EPIC OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NEXT YEAR!”

—Ruth-Ann Soodeen, Board President

Jared's Story

One of the most commonly heard comments from customers who visit Classic Fireplaces on Archibald Street is how clean the family-owned business is.

That's gratifying for Jared, who handles most of the cleaning duties at the St. Boniface-based business his parents Helen and Pete have owned for the past 25 years. Not only is Jared responsible for vacuuming the showroom and dusting the many fireplaces and barbecues on display, he also cleans the storeroom and takes care of duties such as shredding documents.

"It makes me feel pretty good," Jared says of the comments from customers. "I don't know why, it just does."

Such comments make his parents feel pretty good too.

"Oh yes. Jared gets compliments all the time. Our customers comment a lot on how clean the store is," says his mom Helen. "He's very versatile and dependable and takes pride in his work. He's such an integral part of making everything here function."

Jared began working at the business following graduation, soon after it first opened its doors to customers. He's missed only a handful of days during that time and has been one of the business's hardest working and most dedicated employees.

"I like my job," Jared says. "I like doing the cleaning. (And) I like working with my parents."

As important as Jared's contribution to the business is, his mom says it might not be possible without the support of Epic Opportunities.

Jared has been supported by Epic Opportunities since its early days when it was known as Hope Centre. A big part of that support is the assistance

he receives from a disability support worker (DSW) who accompanies Jared to and from work and is there to answer any questions he may have as well as provide him with instruction and feedback when necessary.

"It's unbelievable," Helen says when asked about the support Epic Opportunities provides Jared at work.

"Without their assistance we could not do this. We simply wouldn't be able to look after our customers and support Jared to perform his duties. For the most part he does his duties on his own. But the Epic staff are there to support him with anything he needs. They really help to keep him focused on his duties and help to facilitate what he does."

Richard Charpentier, one of the DSWs who works with Jared on behalf of Epic Opportunities, says his role is to be a resource for Jared and just let him know he's there for him when needed.

"I'm there to provide that support he needs," he explains. "Jared is successful. He knows I'm here if needed. He knows what he needs to do and it comes second nature to him."

In addition to the assistance he receives at work, Epic Opportunities also provides Jared with support for numerous other activities in the community. A golf enthusiast, he often visits The Golf Dome to play mini golf with family or friends. He's also a fan of bowling and frequently racks up spares and strikes at local alleys.

When he's not busy with work or sports, Jared can often be found giving back to the community. He volunteers regularly with Meals on Wheels and continued to help deliver meals even during the coronavirus pandemic. He also lends his support to Archwood Community Club where he often helps out with luncheons the centre hosts.



“HE’S SUCH AN INTEGRAL PART OF MAKING EVERYTHING HERE FUNCTION.” —Helen, Mom

A Communications Breakthrough

Art has been an integral part of Lila's life for quite some time.

A gifted artist, her multi-layered images have earned the praise of anyone who has seen them. Her art has also provided Lila with an important tool to share her thoughts and feelings with others, something she is unable to do verbally.

Lila recently experienced a personal breakthrough when it comes to communicating with others. Last year she began working with a speech language pathologist to explore different tools and methods that would allow her to better express herself.

One of those tools was a GoTalk 9+, a simple, low-tech tablet that can record up to 45 words or messages. The 9 X 12-inch Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device has been available for about a decade and has changed the lives of people with disabilities around the world by literally giving them a voice to speak their mind.

The GoTalk is simple to use. A friend, family member or support staff records messages for everything from daily activities such as "Can I have something to eat" to special occasions such as "happy birthday." The messages can then be played by the user by pressing a corresponding image featured on one of five removable overlays. The device can be used for a variety of different activities, from initiating conversations to supporting daily activities.

Coordinator Carey Richards says the device has been "life changing" for Lila. Whereas she used to sometimes become frustrated when she was

unable to share what she was feeling with others, she can now simply and effectively communicate her thoughts thanks to the tablet.

"She feels way less anxiety and stress now because she can be understood and has a way to communicate her needs to people," Richards explains.

The tablet has been extremely helpful for Lila when it comes to communicating with staff, especially newer staff members who may not understand some of the visual cues that she often uses to express herself.

"Lila seems so much more at peace now because she's better able to communicate her wants and needs," Richards adds. "It's been so cool for Lila to have this new way to communicate and be understood by the people around her."

Prior to having the tablet, Lila often relied on hand signals or facial expressions to share her thoughts with staff and other people she interacted with. She also used a series of pictures posted on a large white board to indicate to staff what she wanted or how she was feeling. While those tools were somewhat effective, Disability Support Worker Rudy Antonio says they didn't really allow Lila to share her thoughts in any great detail.

Now, thanks to the GoTalk, she can say what she means far more precisely. With the help of staff the device has been programmed to say everything from "I need space" or "I want a snack" to tuning the radio to her favourite station. Lila can also use it to communicate to staff what she wants to do on any given day including going for a walk at one of her favourite outdoor destinations such as FortWhyte Alive or Assiniboine Park.



“SHE FEELS WAY LESS ANXIETY AND STRESS NOW BECAUSE SHE CAN BE UNDERSTOOD AND HAS A WAY TO COMMUNICATE HER NEEDS TO PEOPLE.” —Carey Richards

New Home Offers A 'Fresh Start'

One of the greatest joys in life for David is hosting family and friends at his home.

Whether it's his mom and dad, his girlfriend Corrine or one of his close friends, there are few things the personable and outgoing David savours more than spending time with those he's close to.

That's a big part of the reason why he is eagerly looking forward to moving into the new home he will be sharing with longtime roommates Nathan and Todd beginning later this fall. The three bedroom, 1,200-square-foot bungalow has a spacious kitchen area with an island that is ideal for preparing meals for guests. It also has a well-manicured backyard with a large deck that is perfect for barbecuing or cracking open a cold one in the summer. In addition, the living room features a live edge fireplace and mantel that will be great for hosting people when the temperatures outdoors start to drop.

"I would say I like it better than our old house. I like the new surroundings and the new neighbours here," David says of the River Heights area house.

The house was purchased by Epic Opportunities this past May thanks to an \$80,000 grant from the Epic Opportunities Foundation, the fundraising wing of the not-for-profit agency. It's the third new home purchase made possible through a grant from the Foundation, which covered the full down payment required to purchase the home. Since the Foundation was established in 2011, Epic Opportunities has purchased nine new homes. In the early days, funds raised by the Foundation did not cover the full portion of a down payment. Now, thanks to the Make a House a Home campaign and the generosity of many loyal contributors, the goal of Epic Opportunities to raise enough funds to purchase 10 new homes is close to becoming a reality.

While admitting he will likely feel a bit of sadness when it comes time to leave the old house he shared with his roommates for nearly a decade,

David is excited about the prospect of the three of them having an opportunity to make a "fresh start" in a new location.

Epic Opportunities began looking last October to purchase a new home to replace the rental accommodations the three men previously occupied. They all played key roles in that search, with each providing a list of needs and preferences they would like to see in any new home.

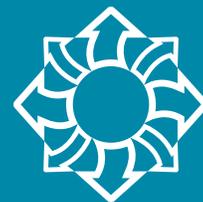
David, who has been supported residentially by Epic Opportunities for nearly 20 years, says one of the things that made the new house so attractive to him is the fact it's located just a few minutes from his previous home. That means he'll still be able to shop at all the same stores he already does, use the same bus routes, do all of his banking at his current branch and continue to worship at the same church he has since he first moved into his own place.

And because the new house will be owned by Epic Opportunities, David and his roommates will also have far more say in determining their living arrangements, from choosing how it is furnished to influencing decisions on any renovations that could eventually be required.

"It's going to be like night and day for them," Coordinator Mallory Mitchell says of the new house. "They now have a way to really take ownership of the house and decide how they want to make their house look and feel. Now it's like the sky's the limit for them."

Best of all, perhaps, is the fact that David, Nathan and Todd will be able to make those decisions together. They have developed a close bond over the years and consider each other to be brothers.

"We get along pretty well," David says. "There are times we like to do our own things. But I just like being with them. I enjoy their company."



“I WOULD SAY I LIKE IT BETTER THAN OUR OLD HOUSE. I LIKE THE NEW SURROUNDINGS AND THE NEW NEIGHBOURS HERE.” —David

Share And Share Alike

A few years ago, Lisa set a goal for herself to become more independent.

This past spring she was able to realize that goal when she moved out on her own for the first time with help provided by Epic Opportunities and its new home sharing service. The service matches people who are seeking a supported living arrangement with individuals in the community who are willing to share their home and provide care in a nurturing, safe and stable environment that promotes growth and encourages personal choice and opportunity.

In May, Lisa moved into her new home in south Winnipeg with Shanae McLeod, a health care aid and former Disability Support Worker (DSW) with Epic Opportunities. Lisa says the move has turned out to be everything she had hoped for.

“I’m happy about it. I feel like I made the right decision,” she says while looking around the three-bedroom apartment she now shares. “Here it’s different. I’m a lot more independent here.”

Not only has the move provided Lisa with more independence, it’s also given her an opportunity to start afresh. Her mom, Linda, passed away nearly six years ago and seeing reminders of her at the home she shared with her dad, Garth, was sometimes difficult.

“There were a lot of memories at the house,” she says. “Here, it feels like a fresh start.”

Lisa and Shanae had an opportunity to start building a relationship before they moved in together. Shanae supported Lisa last summer while she was still working as a DSW with Epic Opportunities.

In fact, it was Shanae’s work as a DSW that prompted her to consider becoming part of the home share service. She had seen the effect

staff turnover can sometimes have on people who are served in the community and felt she could provide more consistent support through home sharing and its one-on-one approach.

“I think here you can help more and offer more continuity of support,” she says.

The process of sharing a home actually began nearly a year before Lisa and Shanae moved in together. First, Epic Opportunities conducted a rigorous assessment process which includes a thorough screening of potential home share hosts. Lisa and Shanae then searched for a suitable apartment that met each of their personal needs, including close proximity to their respective families.

Unlike other residential services provided by Epic Opportunities, there is no paid hourly staff as part of the home service model. Instead, the in-house caregiver supports an individual to deal with day-to-day issues and achieve long-term goals.

“It gives a different kind of meaning to life to people who open their home,” says Service Development Coordinator Jennifer Welsh. “You are supporting someone to have a better life each and every day. It provides a lot of personal fulfillment to see them learn and grow and gain new skills.”

Lisa says her new living arrangements have already had a profound impact on her.

“I’m not a very good communicator with everybody,” she says. “Here, I’m a good communicator. I need to be able to talk. If something is bothering me or on my mind I have to speak up and not be afraid to ask people for help. If there is an issue I have to talk about it so I can move on.”

Shanae says she too has gained from the experience of sharing her home with Lisa.



“As much as I have helped Lisa and seen her become more independent, she has helped me learn more about myself and learn new skills,” she explains. “She’s grown as a person and so have I.”

The pair have also discovered how much they have in common. They both share many of the same values, including a strong sense of faith, and are both self-described night owls.

As much as she has enjoyed her home sharing experience, Shanae has some advice for anyone who may be interested in doing likewise. The most important thing, she says, is to be prepared to make a long-term commitment.

“I’ve talked to people and I tell them it’s definitely a commitment,” she says. “It’s not a short-term thing. You have to be committed to sharing your life with someone.”

Welsh says while home sharing is still a relatively new service model for Epic Opportunities, there has been significant interest in it by members of the community. She expects the service will continue to grow based on demand and preliminary work has already begun in regards to determining the suitability of a second potential home share residence.



“I’M HAPPY ABOUT IT. I FEEL LIKE I MADE THE RIGHT DECISION. I’M A LOT MORE INDEPENDENT HERE.” —Lisa

An Epic Anniversary

Traditionally, tin or aluminum have been used to mark the 10th wedding anniversary of couples as the two metals are said to represent both durability and flexibility. Those two metals might also be appropriate materials to mark the 10th anniversary of our organization being renamed Epic Opportunities and the remarkable durability and flexibility it has shown over the years.

The not-for-profit agency was originally founded on Nov. 11, 1972 as Hope Centre Inc. by the Christian Reformed Churches of Winnipeg to serve individuals living with an intellectual disability to live and work independently in the community. It's original purpose was twofold: to offer programs for children and teens and faith-based study groups for adults; and provide for community needs and help people feel cared for and safe.

Ten years ago we forged a new identity to better reflect our vision for the future: one where all people are valued and contributing members of the community.

Started out of a single location in an old two-storey house on Alfred Avenue with a small group of volunteers, the organization has grown by leaps and bounds since becoming Epic Opportunities. It now has 350 employees serving 176 people at 51 different locations across the city and provides six broad areas of service: Supported Independent Living (SIL); home share opportunities; shift-staffed homes; outreach services; day services; and transportation.

Despite the myriad of changes, Executive Director Ruby Reimer says the organization's key values have remained much the same since its early days.

"Much has changed since this humble beginning and yet many of the same characteristics still define us today. Our story is still one of hope, determination, community, progress and change," she says. "Our goal is to keep adapting to ensure we stay relevant to the needs that exist in our community."

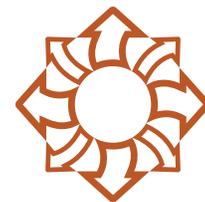
It was a desire to adapt to the changing times and the needs of the community it served that led to the transformation of Hope Centre into Epic Opportunities in 2010.

Under the leadership of then Executive Director Jeannette DeLong, it was determined the time had come for a refresh and to more clearly identify the organization's vision, mission and values more clearly. That in turn led to extensive consultations with people served by the organization and their families, employees and community members on what they thought the organization was and what it should be.

"We went through a whole process of clarifying our purpose, vision and mission. We had to think about who we were and what we were doing, what did that mean for our name and how do we reflect that," DeLong recalls.

A marketing expert was brought in to help with a rebranding of the organization. They suggested several new names but all of them seemed to miss the mark, especially after the earlier consultations with stakeholders identified empowerment, people and community as key priorities for the new organization.

A member of the Epic Opportunities board of directors at the time, Shari Diamond, began tinkering around with those words and soon after came up with the suggestion EPIC, an acronym for Empowering People In Community, which eventually became Epic Opportunities.



“MUCH HAS CHANGED SINCE THIS HUMBLE BEGINNING AND YET MANY OF THE SAME CHARACTERISTICS STILL DEFINE US TODAY. OUR STORY IS STILL ONE OF HOPE, DETERMINATION, COMMUNITY, PROGRESS AND CHANGE.”

—Ruby Reimer, Executive Director

DeLong recalls: “By the time we got to the name Shari put forth it was ‘Yes, of course. That has to be the name.’ It was abundantly clear because of all the consultation we had done at the time.”

Still, it took considerable soul searching as an organization before the name change was adopted. Most importantly, leadership wanted to ensure that the new identity honoured the organization’s past while at the same time providing a better understanding of its current mission.

“It was important for us to reflect an organizational shift away from the concept of a centre. It’s the people that matter,” Reimer says. “To serve people well and reflect a more self-directed and empowered approach we needed a refresh.”

Although she’s no longer directly involved with Epic Opportunities, DeLong says she is pleased to see how the organization has grown and evolved since adopting its current mission and identity.

“I think the name change brought a lot of opportunity to open conversations with people and talk about Epic Opportunities and what we were doing,” she says. “As a result of that, I think we were able to articulate and influence a perspective of inclusion and belonging in a much stronger way with our stakeholders.”

Another important milestone is just around the corner for Epic Opportunities. In 2022 it will celebrate 50 combined years of service and support to the community. While details are still being finalized, you can be sure of one thing: it will be a truly Epic celebration.

“We await this future with an emphasis on hope, determination, community, progress and change for some things truly never do change,” Reimer says. “We know this journey will indeed be epic!”



Epic Opportunities Foundation

The Epic Opportunities Foundation was officially established in 2011 as the primary fundraising body for Epic Opportunities. It is governed by a volunteer board of directors who represent the community we serve as well as the community at large.

In addition to developing and implementing fundraising initiatives, the foundation manages all funds raised on behalf of Epic Opportunities and promotes community awareness of the organization and its activities. The foundation's primary fundraiser has been the annual An Evening with Epic held each fall in Winnipeg. This year, in response to a global pandemic, the event will move to an online campaign called My Epic Home. Using virtual tools the foundation hopes to offer a different platform for giving, broaden its visibility to new supporters in the community and also recognize long term contributors who have been loyal throughout the past nine years.

The three main objectives of the Epic Opportunities Foundation are:

- *To provide funding to Epic Opportunities for capital expenditures such as long-term, community-based housing for individuals with intellectual disabilities*

- *To provide funding to Epic Opportunities for special projects or initiatives that might not otherwise be available for persons with intellectual disabilities*
- *To raise the profile of Epic Opportunities and its work in the community*

The Epic Opportunities Foundation began disbursing funds for various one-time projects in 2014. Its ultimate goal is to establish an endowment fund to purchase additional homes and provide long-term, stable housing tailored to the needs of individuals the organization supports.

For more information about the Epic Opportunities Foundation's activities or on how to become involved in the foundation contact Epic Opportunities at info@epicmb.ca or call **(204) 560-2804**.



Thank You to Our Supporters

We would like to acknowledge and thank all of our capital campaign and corporate donors for their ongoing support of our work. This assistance has been critical to our efforts to support individuals with intellectual disabilities to live, learn and work in the community.

THESE DONORS INCLUDE

MAKE A HOUSE A HOME – CAPITAL CAMPAIGN DONORS

PLATINUM SPONSOR

- Garth Manness and Family

SILVER SPONSOR

- High Road Property Services Inc.

AN EVENING WITH EPIC – CORPORATE DONORS

GOLD SPONSORS

- Barb and Gerry Price
- Mercier & Associates
- Tache Pharmacy
- Taylor McCaffrey LLP

SILVER SPONSORS

- Assiniboine Credit Union
- Broadview Homes
- Inclusion
- Sepehr Sobhani
- Sun Life Financial

BRONZE SPONSORS

- BDO
- Hunter Power Energy
- Maximum Realty
- Oldfield Kirby Esau

OTHER SPONSORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

- Carlyle Printers

We would like to offer our sincere thanks to all of the groups, families and community partners who contributed to our various fundraising initiatives throughout the year. We are also grateful to all the individuals, companies and organizations who donated prizes for our annual An Evening With Epic fundraiser.



Help us reach a goal of \$80,000 towards the next purchase of a house – to make a home for the people we serve.

Why \$80,000? We believe that everyone deserves a home – a place to feel safe and secure, to make choices and enjoy the lasting comfort of living in a neighbourhood where you belong. By raising \$80,000 you will help Epic Opportunities secure the funds for a down payment to buy a house. You will help people served by Epic Opportunities turn this house into their home. Home ownership means more stability for vulnerable people, removing the risk of a rental house where a landlord may not renew a lease or could sell. Thank you for helping us turn a house into a home.



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BDO Canada LLP
700 - 200 Graham Avenue
Winnipeg MB R3C 4L5 Canada

Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summary Financial Statements

To the Members of EPIC OPPORTUNITIES INC.

Opinion

The summary financial statements, which comprise the summary statement of financial position as at March 31, 2020, and the summary statement of operations for the year then ended are derived from the audited financial statements of Epic Opportunities Inc. (the "Organization") for the year ended March 31, 2020.

In our opinion, the accompanying summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements, in accordance with the criteria disclosed in Note 1.

Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. Reading the summary financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the Organization's audited financial statements and the auditor's report thereon.

The Audited Financial Statements and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited financial statements in our report dated July 2, 2020.

Management's Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements in accordance with the criteria disclosed in Note 1.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

BDO Canada LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants
Winnipeg, Manitoba
July 2, 2020

Summary Statement of Financial Position

March 31	2020	2019
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,033,135	\$ 1,396,403
Accounts receivable	577,961	267,814
Prepaid expenses and supplies	52,216	56,835
	1,663,312	1,721,052
Capital assets	5,756,826	5,645,797
	\$ 7,420,138	\$ 7,366,849
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 613,195	\$ 635,608
Advance - Province of Manitoba	556,346	556,346
Required cash repayments for callable debt	523,443	163,405
Current portion of long-term debt	20,265	19,694
	1,713,249	1,375,053
Callable debt	2,933,061	3,132,009
	4,646,310	4,507,062
Deferred contributions	1,011,176	994,961
Long-term debt	30,532	51,052
	5,688,018	5,553,075
Net assets		
Internally restricted reserve funds	60,000	60,000
Unrestricted	433,771	469,098
Investments in capital assets	1,238,349	1,284,676
	1,732,120	1,813,774
	\$ 7,420,138	\$ 7,366,849

Summary Statement of Operations

For the year ended March 31	2020	2019
Revenue		
Province of Manitoba	\$ 12,142,946	\$ 12,000,464
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority	70,719	85,082
Program revenue	99,718	75,729
Amortization of deferred contributions	30,969	28,938
Rental revenue	45,634	45,210
Donations and fundraising	28,612	23,821
Interest	6,210	3,693
	12,424,808	12,262,937
Expenditures		
Advertising and promotion	10,104	12,831
Amortization	371,739	376,890
Bank charges	4,590	7,391
Information technology	46,437	45,528
Insurance	51,416	46,956
Interest on callable debt and long-term debt	104,920	106,023
Licenses, membership and dues	7,141	3,845
Office supplies, postage and copies	29,950	35,124
Professional fees	131,288	147,578
Program cost	449,883	435,964
Rent	633,534	589,552
Repairs and maintenance	214,687	194,309
Salaries and benefits	9,898,795	9,764,602
Start-up costs	5,180	45,702
Taxes	75,797	75,184
Training	27,411	55,041
Transportation	240,258	225,497
Utilities	193,631	199,500
	12,496,761	12,367,517
Deficiency of revenue over expenditures before other items	(71,953)	(104,580)
Other items		
Transfer to Epic Opportunities Foundation Inc.	(15,883)	(13,667)
Gain on sale of capital assets	6,182	263,311
	(9,701)	249,644
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures for the year	\$ (81,654)	\$ 145,064

The accompanying note is an integral part of these summary financial statements.

For the year ended March 31, 2020

1. Management is responsible for the preparation of summary financial statements. The summary presented includes only the summary statement of financial position and the summary statement of operations. It does not include any other schedules, the significant accounting policies and notes to the financial statements. The summary statements of financial position and operations are presented in the same detail as the audited financial statements, except the note referencing has been removed.

Copies of the audited March 31, 2020 financial statements are available at the organization's office at 200 - 1600 Ness Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba.



epic
opportunities

empowering
people in
community

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