

# 2019-2020 YEAR IN REVIEW



*Community Futures Cowichan bid farewell to Diane Myrden in August 2019, after more than 30 years of dedicated service. Best wishes, Diane!*

Left: Wendy, Kevin, Diane, Carrie, Raf, Cathy

Right: Diane with Honourary CFC Member Mike Coleman



*Strategic Planning at Providence Farm November 2019*

(Left-right):  
Ana Francisco,  
Holly Douglas,  
Caroll Taiji,  
Raf Korkowski,  
Moira Hauk,  
Cathy Robertson,  
Florie Varga,  
Shannon Roome,  
Janna Jorgensen,  
Sarah Morden,  
Kevin Rodger,  
Bob Annis,  
Fab Alberico,  
Gordon Gunn

## Vision

The Cowichan Valley is the place to start, grow, and succeed in business.

## Mission

We provide resources to accelerate business growth and contribute to more resilient communities.

## Purpose

To champion the entrepreneurial spirit!

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# LOANS & CLIENTS



**Our Featured Client** is certainly not our biggest in terms of loan dollars. In fact, she represents one of our smaller “micro-loans” this past year.

Mithrel Parker is a small contractor working on forestry research trials for the provincial government. She contacted CF Cowichan after a referral by a friend. Mithrel had finished a contract in the Prince George area and successfully bid on another contract on the north end of the island. With delays in getting paid for the previous job, she was “cash strapped” and panicking about starting the next one.

A small \$5000 loan helped Mithrel to get prepared and hire part-time employees needed for her next job. This is a perfect example of why the CF Micro-loan exists. It’s a small amount of money that can make a huge impact for small business operators.

**The Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program** was a Business Services highlight this year, as we were fortunate enough to access EDP funding that support two clients with self-disclosed disabilities.

Our first client wanted to expand his tax preparation business and provide small business bookkeeping services. Looking to take specific skill-building courses that would improve services to others and his own business knowledge, the client successfully completed VIU’s ‘Basic Elements of Bookkeeping’. This certification allows him to seek out new clients and offer additional service to existing clients.

The second client was seeking financing and support from the EDP program. We obtained funding for the client to work with a business coach who helped research and develop a business plan for an Island based full-service RV rentals business. The coach not only helped the client re-envision his business idea; together they developed a plan to move this idea forward into a business. CF Cowichan approved a \$25K loan request but given the uncertainty of Covid-19, the client made the decision to put the new business on hold until the 2021 travel season. We look forward to working with the client when he is ready to move forward.

CF Cowichan approved and disbursed three EDP fund loans totalling \$22,200. The successful applicants included an online business to promotes non-toxic living and building; a local artist whose creations are sold at markets and local galleries; and a business that produces and sells auto care products locally and online.

***Community Futures Cowichan has reinvested our \$3.1 million in loan funds back into the community three times over since 1989. This is thanks to the success of our clients and their ability to repay their loans with the prudent management of our loan funds.***

## PROGRAMS & PROJECTS



Operating across BC, the **Export Navigator Program** has been helping businesses grow since 2016. In June 2019 Community Futures Cowichan became a program partner for Southern Vancouver Island & Gulf islands. Leading the program for Cowichan is advisor Fabrizio Alberico, MBA.

Export Navigator is a FREE program that connects business owners with a local Export Advisor who can help them find new customers beyond BC.

Our Advisor Fab ensures businesses receive the support they need, including community-based, in-person support and streamlined connections to business development services.

In the Cowichan the Manufacturing, Agri-Goods and Consumer Goods are the dominant sectors supported by the Program.



### Lake Cowichan Region Trail Society Project Funded by the BC Rural Dividend Fund

In 2018 it was determined the Cowichan Lake Region had an abundance of trails, but none that could be marketed as a world-class biking experience. This project invested into the creation of a Society to develop new and existing trails with the goal of offering a network of exceptional trail experiences. Achieving this goal makes the Region's tourism season and activities more diverse, attracts high-yield visitors and increases community amenities. Milestones achieved over the past year include: formation of a Registered Society (the Cowichan Lake Trail Blazers) with a Board and governance structure; a tentative land-use agreement for acreage bordering the Town of Lake Cowichan; and completion of Phase 1 of 3 for the Master Trail Plan.

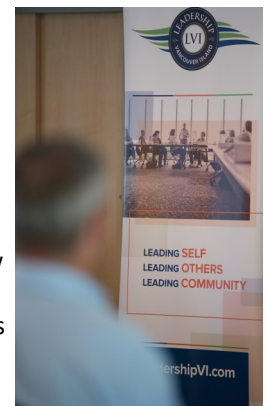


### Leadership Vancouver Island



The Leadership Society of Vancouver Island offers an experiential approach to community leadership development. More than 275 leaders have graduated from the LVI Program and project teams have completed over 50 initiatives in communities between Campbell River and Duncan.

Community Futures Cowichan provides contracted program administration for the LVI Society as part of a multi-year project. This year LVI welcomed CFC's newest staff member, Holly Douglas, as their new Program Coordinator. Highlights from the annual program include a 2-night retreat at Cowichan Lake Research Station and 8 monthly leadership development days. With the onset of COVID-19, volunteers came together to pivot the program to a virtual learning platform for the remainder of the year, and planned a socially-distanced Graduation in June 2020.



### Impacts of COVID-19

Although the COVID Pandemic began to impact operations at the end of the fiscal, it has had significant effects. Here's an overview of our pandemic-response activities ending the year and going into the new year:

- Initiation of the #Cowichan Strong website and emailer for the broader business community. A partnership between CFC, the Duncan-Cowichan Chamber and Economic Development Cowichan.
- Facilitated nine online "Coffee Chats" with MP MacGregor, MLA Furstenau, four Mayors, Tourism Sector reps, Food & Beverage Sector, Retail Sector, Innovation Island Go Digital Program, and WorkBC.
- Supported and contributed to the Cowichan Buy Local Campaign, led by the Downtown Duncan Business Association.

# THE ORGANIZATION

## Board of Directors

Janna Jorgensen, Past Chair  
Moira Hauk, Chair  
Sarah Morden, Vice-Chair  
Michael Evans, Treasurer  
Victor Gamble  
Caroll Taiji  
Dana Thorne  
Matthew Huotari  
Ana Francisco  
Florie Varga

## Business Development Committee

Moira Hauk, Chair  
Dana Thorne  
John Morris  
Matthew Huotari  
Tavish Annis  
Kevin Gamble  
Shannon Roome  
Al Jackson

## Finance & Audit Committee

Mike Evans, Chair  
Victor Gamble  
Julie Scurr

## Staff & Contractors

Cathy Robertson, General Manager  
Diane Myrden, Office Manager\*  
Kevin Rodger, Business Development Analyst  
Carrie White, Executive Assistant\*\*  
Holly Douglas, Office & Program Assistant\*\*\*  
Raf Korkowski, Senior Business Analyst  
Wendy Pan, Finance Officer

\* Diane retired in August 2019 after more than 30 years of dedicated service to CFC!

\*\*Congrats to Carrie on moving into her new role of Executive Assistant!

\*\*\*We welcomed Holly to the team in July 2019. She supports our business services and coordinates the LVI Program.

**Audited financial statements** are available at the office or online at [www.cfcowichan.ca](http://www.cfcowichan.ca)  
Please like and follow us on [Facebook](#) !

## Volunteer of the Year: Janna Jorgensen!

Janna joined our Board in 2016 and served as Director, Co-Chair, and Past Chair. As an organizational leadership & development consultant and facilitator, she has shared her knowledge around succession planning and recruitment, valuable resources for CFC staff and volunteers. Janna is a fifth generation Vancouver Islander and lives in Shawnigan Lake. She holds a Master of



Arts in Leadership from Royal Roads University and a Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of Victoria. Her calling in life is to help awesome people linked to worthy causes do amazing things!



## CFC Values and Guiding Principles

### STRONG RURAL COMMUNITIES

**This means....**

*Strengthening the economy one business at a time  
Showing leadership and working in partnerships*

### CLIENT SUPPORT & SUCCESS

**This means....**

*Business can be complicated and full of opportunity; we are prepared to think outside the box with our clients  
We strive for big wins for small business*

### EMBRACING CHANGE

**This means....**

*The world is changing; we need to keep up in how we do business and how we think  
Every business idea needs to be listened to*

### DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

**This means....**

*The dream of owning a business can be in anyone; we'll help them get started  
We'll seek many perspectives when making decisions and setting direction*