

CCAC Annual Report 2024/2025

Taking the pulse of ethical animal care in Canada

CCAC
CCPA

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Message from the CCAC

This year, the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) committed itself to better understand the perspectives and priorities of its stakeholders and to take stock of itself as an organization. Through thoughtful town hall discussions, collaborative dialogue, and comprehensive surveys (including a stakeholder questionnaire and a national opinion poll), we have established a strong foundation for shaping our 2026–2031 strategic plan – one that aligns with our mission and solidifies our role as the national oversight organization for the ethical care and use of animals in Canadian science.

Equally important this year was our engagement with the federal government, working to foster dialogue with the Tri-Council granting agencies as well as our federal department members, to secure their continued support for an independent oversight system for the ethical use and care of animals in science. The CCAC will continue advocating for ethical practices and policies in animal-based science in the years to come while reaffirming its commitment to advancing standards that protect both the integrity of science and the welfare of animals.

The CCAC also continued to focus on its core services, publishing three revised guidelines: *CCAC guidelines: Laboratory animal facilities*, *CCAC guidelines: Scientific procedures (Part A – Administration of substances and biological sampling)* and *CCAC guidelines: Scientific procedures (Part B – Analgesia, anesthesia, and surgery)*, while creating a new framework for the development and maintenance of its policies. The new framework will emphasize collaboration and include a consultation with CCAC-certified institutions to obtain feedback on the clarity of the requirements and the potential impacts on their institutions. A revision of the CCAC reportable animal welfare incident program has been prioritized, and the creation of a policy is forthcoming.

The 2024 stakeholder survey showed that more in-depth training opportunities would benefit program participants and, as a first step, the CCAC launched its virtual learning series in the fall. The first three webinars of this series focused on topics that most concerned program participants, and plans for future webinars are already in development.

September brought with it the launch of the first phase of the CCAC's transparency initiative as well as several discussions with certified institutions looking to increase their level of transparency. In February 2025, the CCAC assisted a new national transparency agreement group with a survey that was sent out by the CCAC on behalf of the Canadian Association for Laboratory Medicine, the Canadian Association for Laboratory Animal Science, the Alliance of Canadian Comprehensive Research Universities, and other members of the Canadian research community. While it is not the CCAC's role to create such an agreement, we fully support the organizations who are making strides in this direction and look forward to seeing this long-awaited step become reality.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making the CCAC's goals achievable this year and every year. Your dedication, hard work, and support are the driving forces behind our success, and we look forward to continuing this important work together in the year ahead.



Ms. Catherine Rushton
CCAC Chair



Mr. Pierre Verreault
CCAC Executive Director

Who We Are

The CCAC is a unique and Canadian solution to overseeing the ethical care and use of animals in science. On behalf of the Government of Canada, the CCAC has provided a harmonized, independent, pan-Canadian system for the oversight of animal-based scientific activities in Canada since 1968. This is done through a rigorous process of standards development, assessment, certification, and training.

The CCAC relies on the support of approximately 2,000 people, serving on more than 200 local animal care committees, to help fulfill its mandate. We are also fortunate to work with hundreds of volunteers who give their time and expertise to the CCAC by participating on the CCAC Board of Directors and numerous committees, subcommittees, task forces, and assessment panels. Still more volunteers comment on documents and translations or review the drafts of CCAC guidelines documents. Together, we share a common goal of continuously improving the standards for the ethical care and use of animals in science, and work diligently to deliver our program in institutions across Canada. The CCAC's work would not be possible without this vibrant volunteer community.



Visit our website to learn more about our vision, mission, and mandate

Assessment and Certification	• Assists in the implementation of CCAC standards across Canada • Provides independent, third-party oversight • Collaborates with more than 200 animal care committees and a strong network of volunteer experts • Promotes good animal practices, including Three Rs principles
Standards	• Develops ethical principles, guidelines, and policies for animal care and use in Canadian science • Ensures that standards development is based on evidence and includes input from the public, scientists, veterinarians, animal welfare experts, and other relevant experts • Incorporates the Three Rs into CCAC standards
Training and Networking	• Provides training, networking activities, and resources • Creates online training tools, webinars, and modules • Hosts the annual CCAC national workshop
Governance	• Provides support for the CCAC's overarching governance structure • Supports strategic planning, performance measurement, and impacts assessment functions
Operations	• Manages the CCAC's human, financial, administrative, and material resources • Ensures and supports seamless and effective organizational performance and delivery of the CCAC program
Public Affairs and Communications	• Creates and implements an organizational communication strategy aligned with the CCAC's strategic plan, mission, and mandate • Supports the CCAC in communications, graphic design, copyediting, translation, and revisions • Continually improves the efficiency of its engagement with CCAC stakeholders, including certified institutions, member organizations, the media, and the public

Ethical Animal Care

At the core of the CCAC is the fundamental ethical requirement to treat animals used for research, teaching, and testing with high standards of care across Canada.

It is well established that ensuring animal health and welfare leads to an improvement in the reproducibility and translatability of scientific results, which then leads to better science. Together with our group of dedicated volunteers, which includes scientists, animal welfare experts, animal health professionals, administrators, animal care committee members, and community representatives, the CCAC is creating guidance materials that prioritize the lives and experiences of individual animals used in science, and capture how these scientific activities impact their welfare.

The CCAC and its volunteers play a pivotal role in the Canadian scientific landscape. The country's scientific community relies on us to develop and oversee the ethical animal practices upon which its findings are built. At the same time, Canadians count on us to ensure that animal-based science is ethical, and that the Three Rs principles of replacement, reduction, and refinement are respected and applied according to high quality, science-informed standards.



Our Goals

We are one of Canada's most important advocates for the ethical treatment of animals in science and are dedicated to collaborating with our partners and volunteers to continue working on our core activities. As we look to the future of animal-based science in Canada, the following four goals will guide our operations until 2026.

More information about our strategic plan is available on our website



Goal 1

Advance the integration of Three Rs practices in the ethical care and use of animals

Goal 2

Ensure a high level of animal care and ethical practices through leading, science-informed standards

Goal 3

Adapt the CCAC to an evolving environment

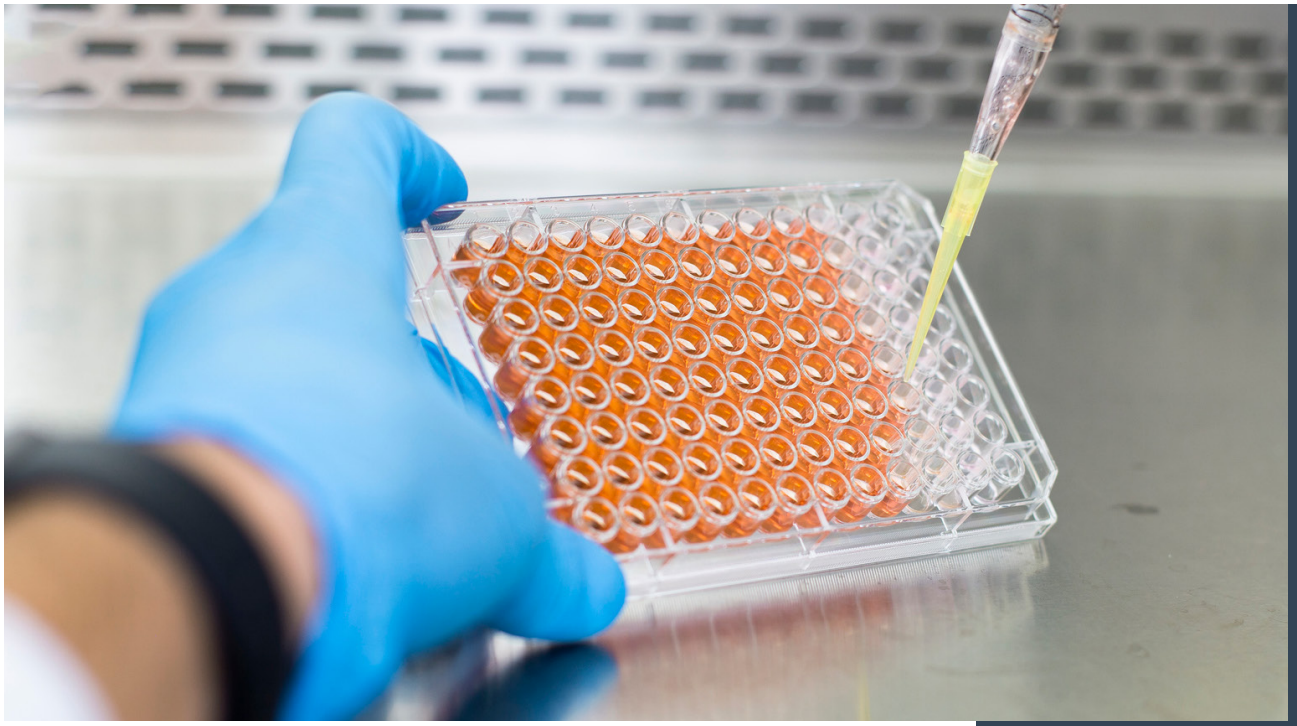
Goal 4

Work in partnership with the CCAC community

GOAL 1

Advance the Integration of Three Rs Practices in the Ethical Care and Use of Animals

The Three Rs promote ethical science through the implementation of replacement, reduction, and refinement strategies and are foundational to the CCAC's program. Working hand-in-hand with our partners and volunteers across the country, we continue to tackle the gaps in their implementation and improve the care and ethical use of animals in Canadian science.



Our Objectives

- Enhance reproducibility to increase translation
- Improve experimental design
- Enhance and strengthen partnerships

GOAL 2

Ensure a High Level of Animal Care and Ethical Practices Through Leading, Science-Informed Standards

The delivery of our mandate is based in large part on our standards, which give clear direction to institutional animal care and use programs. The CCAC and its many volunteer experts work together to develop evidence-based guidelines that incorporate expert peer advice, the values of Canadians, and strategies to reduce the need for, and harm of, animals in science, while promoting their well-being.



Our Objectives

- Remain a leader in the ethical care and use of animals
- Enhance the impact of guidelines by supporting adoption and implementation by the scientific community

3 guidelines documents published

1 guidelines document in expert review

1 guidelines document in public review

9 guidelines documents in development

GOAL 3

Adapt the CCAC to an Evolving Environment

One of the key aspects of the CCAC is its community-driven and collaborative approach. Throughout the assessment process, CCAC staff and volunteers work closely with certified institutions to ensure that ethics and animal welfare are always a priority. We are committed to working together to continuously refine and adapt our processes to ensure that they strike a balance between maintaining a rigorous assessment and certification process and reducing the cost of compliance for institutions.



Our Objectives

- Support institutions in achieving compliance
- Adapt the program participation structure

205 certified institutions

69 assessment visits conducted

47 certifications renewed

9 institutions in probation

5 institutions joined the program

GOAL 4

Work in Partnership with the CCAC Community

We continue to work collaboratively with our volunteers and stakeholders to increase engagement and continuously improve the welfare of animals in science. To further this goal, the CCAC launched a number of initiatives and training opportunities to assist institutions in meeting the CCAC's requirements, ensure high standards of oversight for animals used in research, teaching, and testing, and encourage the sharing of best practices.



Our Objectives

- Increase engagement and communication
- Diversify training opportunities

511 attendees at the 2024 virtual national workshop

371 average registrants for each of the three virtual learning series webinars

81% overall webinar satisfaction rate

81% national workshop satisfaction rate

114% follower growth rate on LinkedIn

The CCAC's Top Five for 2024-2025



Three Revised Guidelines Documents

The CCAC published three revised guidelines documents in 2024-2025: the *CCAC guidelines: Laboratory animal facilities* in July 2024, the *CCAC guidelines: Scientific procedures (Part A – Administration of substances and biological sampling)* and the *CCAC guidelines: Scientific procedures (Part B – Analgesia, anesthesia, and surgery)* in March 2025. These documents represent hundreds of hours of work on behalf of the subcommittee volunteers and reviewers and the CCAC truly appreciates their expertise and time. Over the past several years, the CCAC has concentrated its efforts on updating guidelines which were previously contained in the two volumes of its guide and are now published as individual subject-specific documents.



Transparency Initiative

Clear communication and transparency about ethical animal research, teaching, and testing are vital to building public understanding and trust, and play an important role in supporting animal welfare. In September 2024, the CCAC launched its three-phased transparency initiative that will make more information about Canadian animal-based science publicly available, while encouraging certified institutions to become more open and transparent regarding their animal-based scientific activities. The CCAC is also pleased to collaborate with other organizations across Canada as they work toward the creation of a Canadian transparency agreement.



Listening to the Voice of Canadians

In October 2024, the CCAC commissioned Nanos Research to conduct a nationwide opinion poll to gauge the public's thoughts about animal-based science in Canada. This is the third such poll the CCAC has conducted to ensure that its mandate continues to reflect the values of Canadians. In May 2024, the CCAC also launched a widespread survey to better understand the needs of stakeholders and to garner feedback on several topics. The CCAC is committed to working with its standing committees and other program participants to address the challenges raised in this most recent stakeholder survey. In June 2024, the CCAC and national animal care committee coordinators relaunched their quarterly meetings, leading to fruitful discussions and actionable ideas. In September, a virtual learning series was announced to provide more support and guidance to

program participants on various topics. Topics were also added to the 2025 CCAC National Workshop to help address comments.



Virtual Learning Series Launched

The CCAC's virtual learning series was launched in fall 2024 with three webinars: Categories of Welfare Impact, Fish Welfare and Aquatic Facilities, and Animal Welfare Assessment. The series was an early response to the CCAC's spring 2024 stakeholder survey, where program participants requested more virtual training opportunities to discuss CCAC guidelines, policies, and other subjects essential to ethical animal care and use in science. The CCAC has made great progress over the past several years in creating a comprehensive suite of virtual and in-person training opportunities, and plans for more activities will be launched soon. Topics for the next virtual series will be announced in September 2025.



Highlighting Our Volunteers

Year after year, volunteers and subject matter experts across the country have provided an essential service to the CCAC, helping to carry out key aspects of its mandate and ensure the ethical treatment of animals in Canadian science. In 2024-2025 alone, 242 volunteers worked directly with the Secretariat staff, allowing us to make great progress on numerous projects, while across the country, more than 2,000 outstanding individuals served on more than 200 local animal care committees within their certified institutions.



Interested in lending your expertise to the CCAC? Contact us today!

Volunteer Snapshot

120 volunteers participated on subcommittees and task forces

- **10** active subcommittees and task forces
- **39** meetings

48 volunteers participated on standing committees

- **5** standing committees
- **25** meetings

59 volunteers participated on assessment panels

15 volunteers presented at the national workshop



Visit our website to see our list of 2024-2025 volunteers

Nanos – Listening to Canadians

In October 2024, the CCAC commissioned Nanos Research to conduct a nationwide opinion poll to gauge the opinions of Canadians on animal-based science in Canada, and on the necessity of ethical oversight and transparency in research institutions.

75% believe it's very important to consider the welfare of animals when deciding whether to use them in science

74% believe it's acceptable to use animals for medical and scientific purposes when no alternatives are available

83% believe that Canadian institutions using animals in science should be more transparent about their use

82% believe that all organizations using animals in Canadian science should adhere to an independent oversight system

68% believe that any animal use oversight system should be financially independent from the organizations it certifies

For more findings and insights into what these results mean, please visit our website

CCAC Stakeholder Survey

In May 2024, the CCAC launched a widespread survey to stakeholders to better understand the needs of its community and to garner feedback on a number of topics including engagement, communication, CCAC programs, and overall satisfaction.

83% believe the CCAC places appropriate emphasis on animal welfare

80% believe the CCAC provides value to their institution's animal care and use program

80% agree that the CCAC's standards support their animal care and use program

78% agree that CCAC certification is tangible evidence that their institution's ethical animal care and use program complies with high standards

The CCAC periodically polls its stakeholders and the broader Canadian public as part of Goal 4 of its strategic plan, to increase engagement and communication with its community.

CCAC Recognition Award Winners



The CCAC is fortunate to be supported by so many knowledgeable professionals who dedicate their time and expertise to its mission and mandate. In January 2024, the CCAC announced that, in addition to the Harry C. Rowsell Lifetime Achievement Award, two more awards would be added: the Gilles Demers Award for Excellence in Animal Care, and the CCAC Emerging Leader Award.

More information about our recognition awards is available on our website

CCAC Emerging Leader Award

The CCAC Emerging Leader Award recognizes individuals with less than 10 years of experience in the field of ethical animal care and use, who have demonstrated exceptional growth in their levels of leadership, responsibility, sphere of impact, and contributed to both the ethical care and use of animals in science and to the CCAC. The 2024 winner is Dr. Aurore Dodelet-Devillers.



Dr. Aurore Dodelet-Devillers, Senior Clinical Veterinarian at the Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre (RI MUHC), is at the forefront of new advancements in Three Rs practices and ethical animal care. She is also a strong advocate for animal rehoming following study completion, ensuring adopted animals leave with health reports and care details. A CCAC volunteer, she has collaborated on guidelines documents, encouraged her team to contribute to draft reviews, and participated on multiple assessment panels. She is also an active volunteer with the Canadian Association for Laboratory Animal Science.



Gilles Demers Award for Excellence in Animal Care

The Gilles Demers Award for Excellence in Animal Care recognizes the great importance of individuals who have made exceptional contributions to institutional animal care and use programs, upholding high ethical standards and practices, and who actively champion the CCAC program within their organization. Ms. Colleen Geary Joo and Dr. Lise Phaneuf are the winners of the 2024 award.



Ms. Colleen Geary Joo, Senior Manager and Coordinator of Animal Care Committees at the University of Calgary, has dedicated over 25 years to ensuring high ethical standards in animal care. A strong advocate for continuing education, she helped develop the university's Institutional Animal User Training Program, supporting veterinary, research, and animal care staff. Ms. Geary Joo also plays a key role in creating policies and procedures for the university's ethical animal care and use program. As a role model, she empowers her team, fosters positivity in the workplace through team building, and works diligently to provide an equitable, diverse, and inclusive workplace.



Dr. Lise Phaneuf, Senior Director of Animal Resources and Compliance at the Centre for Phenogenomics, is an experienced veterinarian and administrator dedicated to animal welfare and best practices. Her leadership has transformed her institution into a leading mouse research facility, enabling groundbreaking research while upholding the highest ethical standards. Dr. Phaneuf's pursuit of the development of alternative methods and the elimination of sentinel mice has resulted in the creation of a sentinel-free animal facility. Dr. Phaneuf regularly contributes to several Three Rs and rodent health groups and to the CCAC, sharing her expertise worldwide.



Harry C. Rowsell Lifetime Achievement Award

The Harry C. Rowsell Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes dedicated individuals who have made a lifetime of exceptional contributions to the CCAC and who uphold the highest standards in the ethical care and use of animals in Canadian science. This award is named for the CCAC's founding executive director, who devoted his life to promoting the optimal care and use of animals in Canadian science. Dr. Ovidiu Jumanca and Mr. Robert Madziak are the winners of the 2024 award.



Dr. Ovidiu Jumanca, Director of Animal Facilities and Technical Services at the Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal (IRCM), is highly respected by IRCM staff and the global animal care community, and is known for his dedication to animal welfare. Dr. Jumanca has mentored many professionals, helping them excel in their careers. He works closely with the IRCM's animal care committee and research teams to reduce animal use and enhance the animals' quality of life and health. He is also deeply involved in volunteer work, dedicating countless hours to initiatives like the CCAC's national workshops, Canadian Association for Laboratory Animal Medicine outreach, and the Canadian Association for Laboratory Animal Science conference, and sitting on both the CCAC Board of Directors and its Assessment and Certification Committee. Dr. Jumanca's efforts have greatly improved animal care both in Canada and internationally.



Mr. Robert Madziak, former Director of Central Animal Care Services at the University of Manitoba, dedicated over forty years to improving laboratory animal care. His efforts led to significant advancements in ethical animal care and, through his professional and volunteer work (including as a member of the CCAC Board of Directors), he promoted respect for animal life. Mr. Madziak was a member of several animal care committees, helped plan and design new and renovated animal facilities, and made a lasting impact through CALAS training programs, notably playing a major role in developing the Associate Registered Laboratory Animal Technician program. A strong advocate for best practices and continuing education, he championed the recognition of, and respect for, the role animals play in science.

Get Involved



Volunteer

- Join a Standards subcommittee
- Become a member of an assessment panel
- Review guidelines documents as an expert reviewer
- Review guidelines documents as a public reviewer
- Join the translation advisory group
- Become a member of the CCAC Board of Directors

See our list of volunteers

Recognition Awards

- Nominate someone who has made exceptional contributions to the CCAC and who upholds the highest standards in the ethical care and use of animals in Canadian science
- Open to anyone working in the field of animal care and use in science

Nominate a deserving individual

Training Sessions

- Suggest topics for the CCAC national workshops or other webinars
- Offer your expertise to present a session at one of our workshops or webinars
- Attend training sessions

Learn about our national workshops

Mailing List

- Keep updated on all CCAC news by joining our mailing list
- Join our community on LinkedIn

Join our mailing list

Board of Directors 2024-2025

The CCAC Board of Directors is elected by our member organizations. As the CCAC's leadership team, members of the board are charged with setting the direction of the organization in accordance with its mandate.

More information about our board is available on our website

Chair



Ms. Catherine Rushton
FCPA, FCA

Vice-Chair



Dr. Denna M. Benn
DVM, Dip. Med. (Small Animal Medicine)

Treasurer



Dr. Lucie Côté
Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre

Directors



Dr. Jean-François Cloutier
McGill University



Dr. Michael Czubryt
University of Manitoba



Dr. Richard Dyck
University of Calgary



Mr. Dan Fryer
VCA Canada



Dr. Michelle Groleau
Canadian Veterinary Medical Association



Dr. Vanessa Oliver
University of Calgary



Dr. Jeffrey Richards
University of British Columbia



Dr. Andrew Winterborn
Queen's University

Secretary (non-voting)



Mr. Pierre Verreault
CCAC Executive Director

Member Organizations

The CCAC's membership is comprised of 23 member organizations from across the country, with an interest in science, education, and ethical animal care and use.

More information about our governance structure is available on our website



- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Animal Health Canada
- Association of Canadian Faculties of Dentistry
- Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada
- Canadian Association for Laboratory Animal Medicine
- Canadian Association for Laboratory Animal Science
- Canadian Bioethics Society
- Canadian Cancer Society
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- Canadian Society for Ecology and Evolution
- Canadian Society of Zoologists
- Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
- Council of Canadian Departments of Psychology
- Dean's Council – Agriculture, Food and Veterinary Medicine
- Defence Research and Development Canada
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Health Canada
- Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada
- Humane Canada™
- Innovative Medicines Canada
- National Research Council Canada
- Universities Canada

We are seeking **animal welfare organizations** to join the CCAC membership, so if you work with, contribute to, or support an animal welfare organization that may have an interest in becoming a member of the CCAC, please contact us!

Learn more about joining the CCAC membership

Financial Statements

Revenue

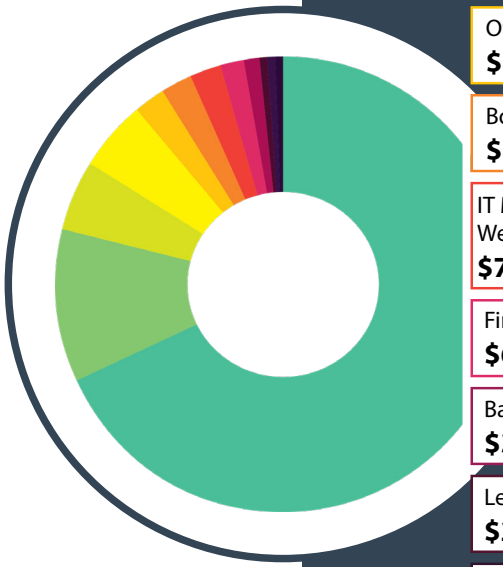
$3,653,526



47.9%	CIHR/NSERC Funding	**$1,750,000**
47.4%	Program Participation Fees	**$1,731,025**
2.6%	Other Revenue	**$95,019**
2.1%	Training Revenue	**$77,482**

Expenses

$3,595,278



68.2%	Salaries and Benefits	**$2,452,191**
10.8%	Professional Fees	**$388,054**
5.0%	Travel	**$180,868**
5.0%	Rent	**$178,494**
2.2%	Office and Administration	**$80,614**
2.2%	Board and AGM	**$80,380**
2.2%	IT Maintenance/Equipment/ Webmaster Service	**$79,165**
1.7%	Finance Service Charges	**$60,984**
1.0%	Bad Debt Expense	**$34,609**
0.6%	Legal and Audit	**$22,024**
0.6%	Committee	**$20,320**
0.5%	Amortization of Assets	**$17,575**

Detailed financial statements are available on our website