

SPUR

Calgary Foundation / Fall 2016



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harmonious initiatives
bringing Calgary's Year
of Music to life

Housing first

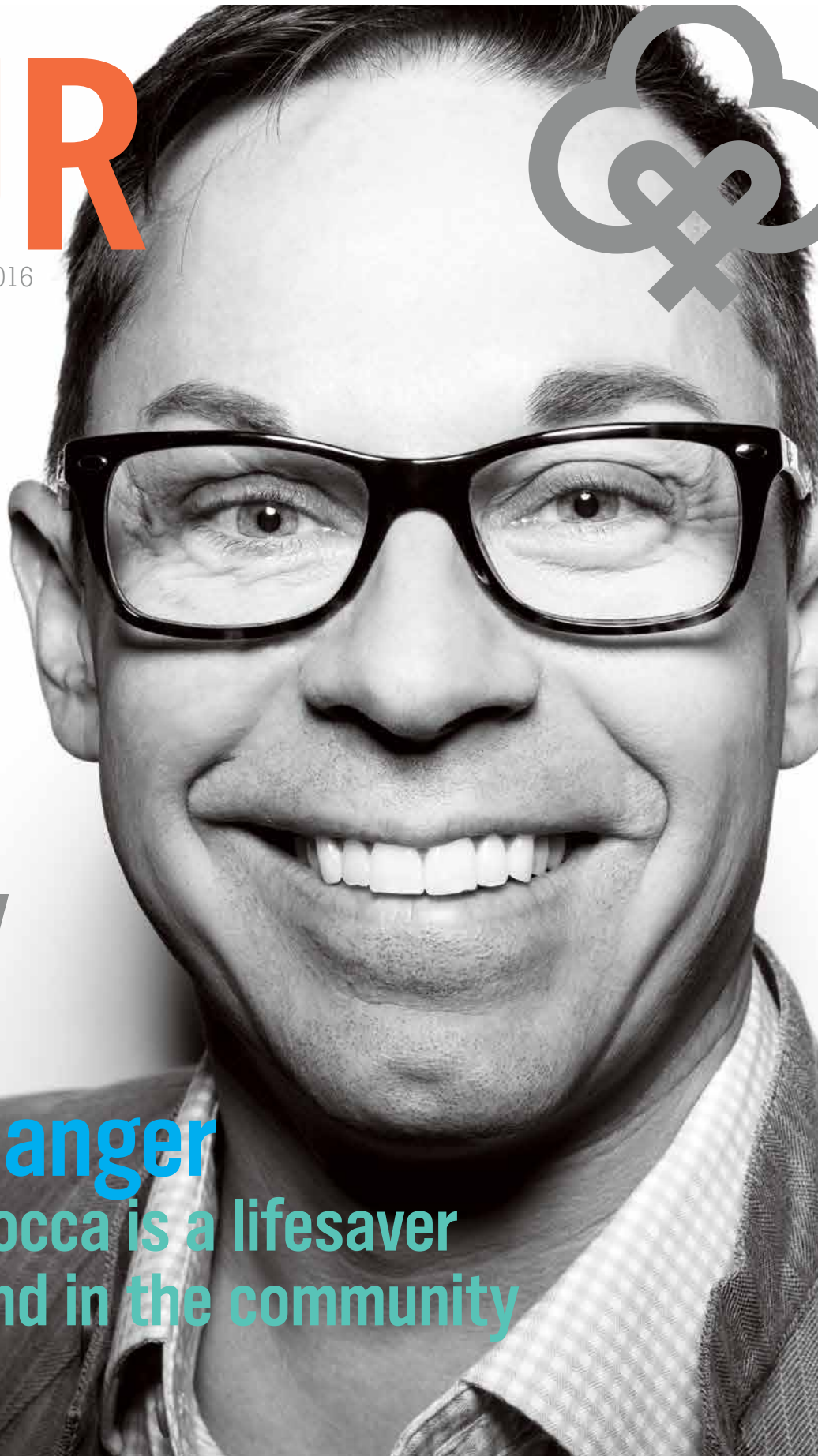
Tackling homelessness
by providing homes

Mighty neighbourly

Rev. Dr. Murray Laverty
celebrates the power of
community collaboration

Game Changer

Enzo della Rocca is a lifesaver
on the job and in the community





Reaching for Higher Notes

The Prophets of Music Fund
is amplifying the gift of creativity

By Elizabeth Chorney-Booth





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ometimes even in the darkest aftermath of devastating loss, people are able to find a glimmer of light.

When Barclay Hunter lost his son Joshua, who was killed along with four other young people in a multiple stabbing in 2014, he was faced with one of the most horrific situations any parent can go through. Josh and his friend Zackariah Rathwell, who was also killed in the incident, were members of a local band called Zackariah and the Prophets, and music had brought both young men a sense of purpose and joy. In time, Hunter realized he wanted to do something to keep the spirit of his son's passion alive.

The Hunter and Rathwell families worked together, and the result is the Prophets of Music Fund at the Calgary Foundation. The Fund supports young musicians creating original music and it has granted more than \$20,000 to organizations focused on youth and music.

"Despite the fact that this was born out of a very tragic event, it's really taken on a dynamic and very creative approach," Hunter says. "Josh was very much a person who would reach out to people and wasn't shy about offering help. This is about music, but it's also about doing good things with music."

One of the Fund's cornerstones is its Emerging Artists Program, and it has

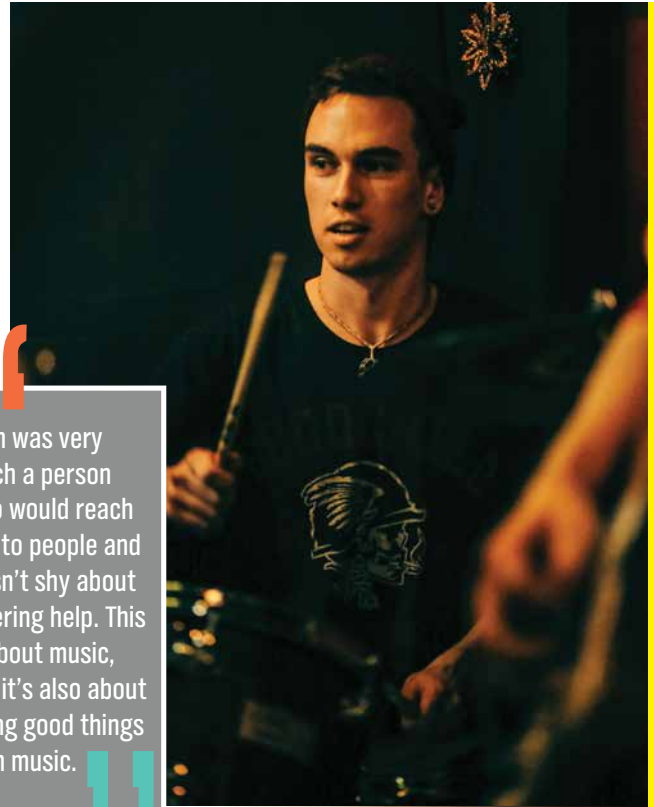
funded existing charities that encourage music development in youth. Here's a look at just two of the initiatives that the fund has supported:

THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB BELTLINE YOUTH CENTRE

The Boys and Girls Club of Calgary runs programs across the city, but its Beltline Youth Centre offers something special for young musicians: a free studio available to youth between the ages of 12 and 24. Young hip-hop artists in particular flock to the centre to be mentored by Calgary artist Transit, who is part of the studio's staff. Having a space where they can not only hone their craft but also form a positive community with other young artists has been life changing for musicians like 17-year-old Nick Wise.

"It wasn't until I started listening to rap lyrics and decoding them that I realized that music was a really good way to express yourself and have a voice and a say," Wise says. "That's what I mainly found in songwriting. It's really like therapy for yourself — that's why music with lyrics is so important to me."

In addition to the studio time and camaraderie, the Boys and Girls Club's Beltline studio also offers opportunities and mentorships to kids who are



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Barclay Hunter



Joshua Hunter, top, and Zackariah Rathwell played together in the band Zackariah and the Prophets. Today, their dreams for a meaningful future drive the Prophets of Music Fund.



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Nick Wise



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Colton Stankowski





seeking a career in music. Colton Stankowski is another young hip-hop songwriter, and was the winner of the Beltline Centre's Triple Threat contest (where musicians had to write and perform a song about community involvement) earlier this year — the prize was studio time at OCL Studios, a world-class recording facility near Langdon just east of Calgary, provided by the Prophets of Music. Stankowski, now 19, says that the Beltline program has given him the confidence to make his musical career a reality.

"The main thing that helps me is having other people around me," Stankowski says. "If I write or record a song I'll play it for the other people there and they'll tell me what they like or don't like. Having those people around is necessary to help you improve and progress."

CHILDREN'S WISH FOUNDATION

Joshua Hunter found tremendous joy in helping others, which makes the Children's Wish Foundation another natural partnership for the Prophets of Music Fund. The foundation's mission of fulfilling wishes for children age three to 17 who are suffering from life-threatening illnesses and supports many young people who dream of making music.

Through the Prophets of Music Fund and the Children's Wish Foundation, OCL Studios recently provided a space for a teenager with cystic fibrosis to fulfill her wish to record a CD of her own songs. The studio also has deep ties to other projects with the Prophets of Music Society, and owner Dan Owen says the world-class calibre of the studio gives visiting kids a real sense that they're doing something big.

"We're an absolutely legit studio," he says. "So these young people coming into it get over a little bit of the 'holy cow' aspect, and then you start to see the professionalism come out of them due to the environment that they're in."

Kyla Martin, the Alberta and Northwest Territories director for the Children's Wish Foundation, says musical wishes, from recording time to instruments, represent something beyond the chance to make music for kids undergoing medical treatment. It's a chance to raise their voices and feel like they have a place in the world, which fits perfectly with the Prophets of Music Society's philosophy.

"It allows them to tell their own story rather than having their story told for them," Martin says. "They get to focus on something other than their illness. It allows them to be not just a kid who has cancer, but a kid who is a musician." ■



It allows them to be not just a kid who has cancer, but a kid who is a musician.

Kyla Martin



For Armando, who has a serious respiratory condition, playing the drums at OCL Studios was a dream that came true thanks to the Prophets of Music Fund and the Children's Wish Foundation. In the middle photo from left, Armando and his brothers Ricardo and Liandro.



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