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Letter from Our Senior Director of Operations



The year 2019 is almost over and we have made significant achievements this year! Some of the highlights are: implementation of our first ever Solar Power Pilot Project in the wake of combating climate change, replacement of the building envelopes of thirteen homes at various locations in Calgary and Edmonton, and the launch of our four new housing programs. These new programs for Métis Citizens are: the Home Ownership Program, the Home Repair Program, the Rental Supplement Program and the Rental Supplement Program for Students. We continue to repair our homes to provide exceptional living space to our people across Alberta.

In my new role as the Senior Director of Operations, our goal remains to provide safe and secure housing to Métis and other Indigenous people in Alberta and we strive to achieve excellence in delivering our services. From getting a home rent ready until it actually gets occupied, our staff works hard to ensure that we are providing a safe and secure place for the peaceful enjoyment of our homes. Our Tenant Relations Officers are always available for any support that you may require during the time period of your tenancy.

To achieve our goal of providing outstanding services by communicating effectively and in a timely manner, we have recently launched our new website www.metishousing.ca. You can also follow us on our Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram accounts by searching Métis Housing AB to keep yourself up to date with our new initiatives.

On behalf of all of us at Métis Housing, we offer a sincere welcome to all the new families and extend our thanks to all families for keeping pride in their homes. We hope you enjoy the warmth of your homes this winter and wish you all a prosperous year in 2020!



**In memory of many, who served
In honour of all, currently
serving
Thank you to our Indigenous
Veterans,
We will never forget.**

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



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Winter Prep Checklist

- Grass cut: make sure to do this *before* the snow flies
- Furnace filters. Although our Maintenance Department just cleaned furnaces, the filters should be changed four times a year.
- Garbage: If you have bags of garbage on your deck, deliver it to the alley before it attracts mice into your home.
- Smoke detectors: You should change the battery twice a year.
- Weather stripping: If you have any gaps in windows or doors, easy to apply weather stripping can go a long way to keeping your home warmer in the winter.
- If you have questions or challenges with any of this checklist call our maintenance line at, Toll Free: 1-877-458-8684

AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY MAINTENANCE, PLEASE CALL 780-717-9005

Tenant Interview with Anita Redcrow

Q. Tell me about your early life.

AR: Raised by a mentally ill mom and abandoned by my father, who had his own little share of mental illness, I was left to fend for our mom who shouldn't have been a mother. There was a lot of trauma and chaos and being dragged all over the place; moving a lot. I was in charge of my younger brothers and sisters, raising them. There was abuse of all kinds, physical, being molested because by all the men mom would bring in, that's how I was raised. We don't talk enough about mental illness in our culture. This really needs to be talked about more because people tend to run to drugs and alcohol to cope with their stress.

When I left home and made the big escape I thought I was leaving all that behind but I didn't realize I just took all that with me. I left with all that garbage inside and ended up bringing on a whole world of hurt because I thought 'I know better'. But I didn't go get help, I didn't go get counselling; things that would have helped me understand.

I ended up having two husbands with addictions but I now know from counselling that when you grow up in that environment you tend to get drawn to that. Growing up in that environment does something to you. You feel damaged, you feel there's no coming back from that, and that's how I felt for years.

Q. What turned things around?

AR: Well I just [knew mom had gotten a lot of things wrong] so that's when I turned back to my faith and counselling. I started to learn that it's not just having faith, you have to go and get counselling too. My mom had used a lot of fear, ('oh they'll take away your kids'), that had kept me away from counselling. So I learned that if I dig down deep and stuff it away, that will make it go away, not realizing that when we have trauma, we carry that in our bodies and the only way to get rid of it is to seek counselling.

Panic attacks is how it [manifested in] me, I started having panic attacks at 13 and no one knew what it was at the time. I thought I was dying so I called my uncle and he said 'take a glass of water and get to bed.' I felt better afterward but I didn't realize where they were coming from. This made me feel even more broken.

Q. How did you come upon Métis Housing?

AR: I felt I had to stay with my kids and be a stay at home mom and protect them by being there all the time. So that's when I applied to Métis Housing, because I needed to finish my education, I didn't have major skills so I had to go where I could look after the kids. Usually, as soon as you tell landlords how many kids you have, they don't want to take you; you scare them off. That was the best thing was not having to lie to them about my kids. I had ended up in shelters [when landlords found out I had lied about the number of kids], which made me hate my life and felt I was reliving my mom's life, so I was getting more and more depressed.

It was 2013 when we got into Métis Housing and I lived in that home for six years. I was glad to find Métis housing because that was the first time I felt I could handle everything: taking care of my kids, being in a home appropriate for us; big enough where everybody had their space. We weren't cramped in a three bedroom where I would be sleeping in the living room so the kids could have their space.

I was very grateful to Métis Housing because they understood and that gave me time to take care of my kids. The low income housing gave me independence for the first time in a long time because I was able to meet all of our needs, not just the rent: clothing, activities, car payment, other responsibilities. This was the first time I was able to feel like a functioning adult and say 'Hey, I can take care of all this'.

I did get my GED high school diploma and want to get into Vanguard College for Pastoral Counselling. So many have asked how I didn't lose my kids due to having so many and I say it's a combination, it wasn't just me, you need a whole lot of people to help you. I was blessed with a lot of good friends back home, Métis Housing is among them because of [the stability it provided] for all those years. Even to the point where when my kids go back home they still stop by and look at that house - everybody does that. It's hard to let that house go. But they know I am here in Edmonton and am fighting to do good in school. It's a big challenge for me because I haven't been in school for a long time but I'm stubborn; they call me *the Pitbull* at home (laughs).

Part of Anita's early life experience is one of ten stories in a new Métis book called *The Promised Land* (to be released in 2020).

Anita has also written her own book called *Never too Damaged*. The book's title is "... because I lived most of my life feeling too damaged and there was no comeback and that was all a lie and you can be more than a survivor. You can rise above: we are overcomers, we are conquerors."



Anita and her children

Colouring Book Contest

We are collecting art for a children's colouring book that is made up entirely of art from our tenants' children who are aged 17 years and younger! Submissions must be **BLACK OUTLINE PICTURES**, (no colouring) of their favourite activity, game, family time, adventure, cultural activity or what they want to be when they grow up. First name, age and parents phone number, along with the title of your picture must be included. Submission sheets will be collected during our pancake breakfasts, BBQ's and can be dropped off at our various offices. We can also email submission sheets out to you/your parents.

New! Home Programs for Métis Citizens



Last year Métis Nation of Alberta President Audrey Poitras, on behalf of Métis Nation of Alberta Citizens, signed a 10-year, \$500 million Métis Nation Housing Accord. The signing of this Accord will allow for Métis Nation Governments from Ontario, west to design and deliver housing services to their Citizens.

Because of this signing, the MNA's housing branch, Métis Capital Housing Corporation, has designed four new programs to support Métis families and students in need of rental supports, home repairs as well as a down payment assistance program.

Since mid-October Métis Nation of Alberta Citizens can apply for:

- ∞ **Down Payment Assistance Program**, providing up to 5% down payment to a maximum amount of \$20,000.00 per approved applicant.
- ∞ **Home Repair Program**, providing a maximum of \$20,000.00 per approved applicant.
- ∞ **Rental Supplement Program**, paying up to \$5400.00 per year, for a maximum of 24 months. MCHC will also pay applicants security deposit to a maximum of \$850.00 per application.
- ∞ **Rental Supplement Program for Students**, paying up to \$2400.00 per year, per approved applicant. MCHC will also pay applicants security deposit to a maximum of \$850.00 per application.

The person tasked with leading the design and details of these exciting new programs is the Director of Métis Capital Housing's newest department; *Strategic Initiatives*. Corrine Card has years of experience working in the housing industry and has spearheaded many pivotal housing projects and programs.

If you have questions on these or any other programs Métis Housing offers, please check our new website at www.metishousing.ca which provides more details on programs & services. You can also email homeprograms@metishousing.ca or call toll free: 1-877-458-8684.

To Apply for Housing go to www.metishousing.ca

Upcoming Events

Métis Housing Métis Week Activities—November 13, 2019

- ∞ 9:30am—11:30am Calgary and Edmonton linked live stream. Info Session of our four new housing programs with concurrent social media Live Stream. Calgary—10 in-person attendees max, Edmonton—15 in-person attendee's max. Bannock, coffee and tea offered.
- ∞ 12:00pm—1:30pm Edmonton Income Tax workshop with Cheryl Wells. Learn about the benefits and credits you may be entitled to when filing your tax return. Bannock, coffee and tea offered.
- ∞ 2:00pm—3:30pm Afternoon Tea and Workshop at Nihgi Seniors Lodge. Learn how to make and decorate a medicine pouch. Bannock, coffee and tea offered.
- ∞ 4:00pm—5:30pm Roof Top Gardening at Renaissance Tower. Tenants will talk about the benefits of gardening and the new green space they have created.

Space is limited for the above events, please RSVP to: 780-452-6440 Ext #1131 or #1133 or email comms@metishousing.ca

Join Our Efforts to Reduce Paper Waste

Help us reduce the usage of paper and save the trees!! There are many documents we would like to send you by email, to reduce waste, cost and exchange documents faster. Please **Send an email to:** gopaperless@metishousing.ca and we'll switch you to paperless, or you can let your TRO know.

This could include our quarterly newsletter, tenant surveys, leases, community events, consultations and other information you can now receive faster. *It's that easy!*



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www.metishousing.ca

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