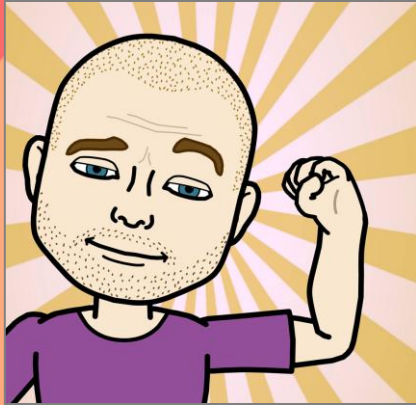




Executive Director's Report 2021-2022

Michael



- He/Him
- Executive Director
- A member of altView since 2014, ED since 2018
- Background is in Psychology, Sociology and Communications
- Creating safer communities through education, empathy, and direct supports
- Contact: mike@altview.ca

The Pandemic

- With the onset of covid-19, altView had to adjust our operations to meet health officials' directives and keep all stakeholders safe. Staff meet for teleconference meetings weekly, and all staff have continued to receive their full pay and benefits regardless of work status.
- Our programs moved online. Sophie and I have moved our peer supports online via Zoom (or via phone) with participants able to book appointments and then receive invitations to private Zoom meetings.
- The year was full of starts and stops, which made it challenging to keep momentum. By Q4 2020, people had become disengaged in online programming and altView (as well as many of our partners) faced hardships in maintaining consistent energy and participation.
- Much of our work focused on meeting people where they were and adapting what our operational direction was depending on needs in the community. This was matched by our internal operations, the team flexed to where our capacity was, with wellness the key focus.

The Staff

- Young, our Director of Community Supports, oversaw our resources, community partnerships, and strategic program direction in conjunction with Michael. Young has assumed control over all frontline mental health supports altView offers including our peer support hours. Into 2022, they took on coordination of community presentations as well.
- One of our community Liaisons, Shay, resigned in June to take on a full time position with AHS. We wish Shay the greatest success.
- With Shay's resignation, we hired a new Community Liaison named Megan. Megan came to us through her work as a teacher and her passion for supporting youth and families shone through in her interview as well as in her time with altView. Megan has been integral in our school presentations, GSA supports, and her Rainbow Reading program.
- Laurel continued to be a star on the team, supporting Young in presentations as well as supporting Michael by taking on grant application and reporting duties.
- Gabe concluded their term with altView in February 2022 and moved on to their social work practicum. We wish them the very best. Funding for the Indigenous Community Liaison was continued through to March 2023 and a hiring committee has been struck to hire a new Liaison.

The Staff

- Michael had been dropped to 15 hours per week as a result of the loss of Family and Community Safety Project dollars in 2020. His work still required him to be full time, so he donated 20-30 hours weekly. This continued through 2022, despite efforts of the team to secure additional funding.
- Throughout the year, Michael focused on strengthening connections in the community. He assisted partnered organizations with hiring committees and covering stress leaves, collaborated with several organizations on collaborative funding projects (grants and events), and ensuring altView was responsive to trends in the community.
- A large portion of Michael's volunteer time was to support the city of Fort Saskatchewan, through the schools, community committees, as well as direct support of The Bridge Wellness Hub for Youth (an integrated youth hub where altView was a key partner).
- Towards the end of 2021, Michael began to struggle with his workload. In January 2022 he took a stress leave of six weeks to try to hit the reset button and deal with the stresses brought on by work. The stress leave would last six weeks from mid-January to March with the staff absorbing his work during that time except for a couple tasks only he could do (deposits, payroll, expenses).
- Michael has resigned as of April 2022 to focus on his new role with the Canadian Mental Health Association. His last day will be June 15th.

The Funding

- This year was challenging for altView and featured several key successes despite the challenges.
- We were a successful recipient of Strathcona County's Core Social Funding in the amount of \$125,000 to cover altView's base operations. This funding is key for supporting our work and we were the lucky recipients of multi-year funding, securing our base operations through to March 2023.
- Our partnership with FCS on a Mental Health Capacity Building funding stream through AHS, will support extended MHCBS supports over three years in two rural schools.
- The Edmonton Community Foundation granted us \$21,500 to continue our partnership with Edmonton Two Spirit Society partnership that has allowed us to continue the Indigenous Community Liaison program.
- We were also the proud recipient of donations from community members and community partners like Park Power. During a time as financially challenging as the pandemic, we are exceptionally grateful to all of the people who chose to support us.
- We received one very generous donation of \$1000 in June from an anonymous donor to go directly to supporting youth. This donation enabled us to expand the GSA Activity Box program.

The Programs

- GSAs struggled as schools bounced from in-person to virtual and back, with cohorts and outbreaks complicating schools gatherings. We supported GSAs virtually where possible, with Ardrossan Jr/Sr being the one we worked with most consistently. Some of this pressure lessened into winter 2022 and more schools began reaching out for GSA support. In particular, several EIPS elementary schools have started GSAs and our team have been supporting them to the end of the 2021-2022 year.
- Presentations greatly expanded throughout the year, the team transferred hours that pre-covid would be allocated to GSA supports towards additional presentations in schools, for organizations, and in community. Just a small taste of the presentations we conducted over the year:
 - Schools : **31** (12 Elementary, 4 Junior, 7 Senior, 8 Professional Development)
 - Organizations: **6**
 - Community: **18**
- Many of these community and organizational presentations were huge successes. Some particular highlights include:
 - Camrose Women's Shelter
 - YMCA-North
 - RCMP – Fort Saskatchewan Detachment
 - YMCA – North
 - CASA Edmonton
 - Inclusive Parenting: All About Identity
 - GSA Conference 2021
 - Pride Festivals 2021

The Programs

- Rainbow Alliance (our biweekly community GSA in partnership with FCSS Fort Sask) continued strong, with our regular youth building their leadership skills within The Bridge space and several of the youth connected to the clinical services available at The Bridge.
- Rainbow Reading was a new program brought to the organization by Megan in September. It is a Reading With Royalty style of program directed at families with little ones where Megan reads a children's book relating to topics like 2SLGBTQ+ identities, allyship, belonging, and what we do when others make us feel bad. Megan livestreams the reading on altView's Facebook page and then engages the audience with activities and discussion questions. She goes live every Friday at 6:30pm and each episode is archived for families to access whenever they want. This has been very successful with 50-150 views per episode, schools starting to use her videos/activities/book recommendations as teaching tools, and a number of people in the community starting to recognize Megan as from Rainbow Reading.
- Michael started up Parenting With Pride which was a safe space for parents to talk about their experiences raising 2SLGBTQ+ kids. It was offered out of the BGC space to hopefully capture some of their families who needed that support. It launched just before what would wind up being a covid wave in autumn 2021 which greatly impacted attendance. Michael chose to not bring the program back after the holiday break in 2022.

The Supports

- Our peer support hours offered co-located within FCS in Sherwood Park and Fort Saskatchewan had to be suspended as those spaces closed to the public in 2020. Rather than let these supports disappear, Young and I adapted them to a more virtual world and began offering these supports via phone and teleconference.
- These peer supports were accessed an average of 5-6 times per week, the vast majority being parents and caregivers of youth 10-13 who had recently come out. The second most common reason for connecting with us was 2SLGBTQ+ adults who had recently come out and were looking for how to connect with others in the community.

The Events

- Obviously, major events were a big challenge in 2021.
- In 2021, Strathcona County hosted its third annual Pride Festival. The week was more subdued than previous, with activities being entirely virtual. The week included a Pride Flag raising, educational opportunities, a Pride Up Your Pet activity, and many more. A key event was the virtual Pride Parade, with organizations submitting short videos that were edited together to create a parade.
- Strathcona County also ran a Pride-themed scavenger hunt in the community to encourage families to get out and explore the community, learn about Pride, and win prizes. It was so successful, it was held over through the month of July, too.
- Fort Saskatchewan also celebrated its third Pride Festival supported by altView with a full week of events, programs, keynote speeches, and community engagement!



The Future

- Adapting to having no Executive Director
- Seeking the funding to be able to hire an Executive Director by March 2023
- Hiring a new Indigenous Community Liaison in May 2022
- Continued development of online programming and services
- Return to in-person programs and services
- The CanTEEN youth space & Gemstones support
- Increased focus on supporting Indigenous communities
- Pride Festivals in Strathcona County and Fort Saskatchewan
- 2022 GSA Conference
- Continued community collaboration
- Development of deeper relationships within the private sector



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Questions?

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