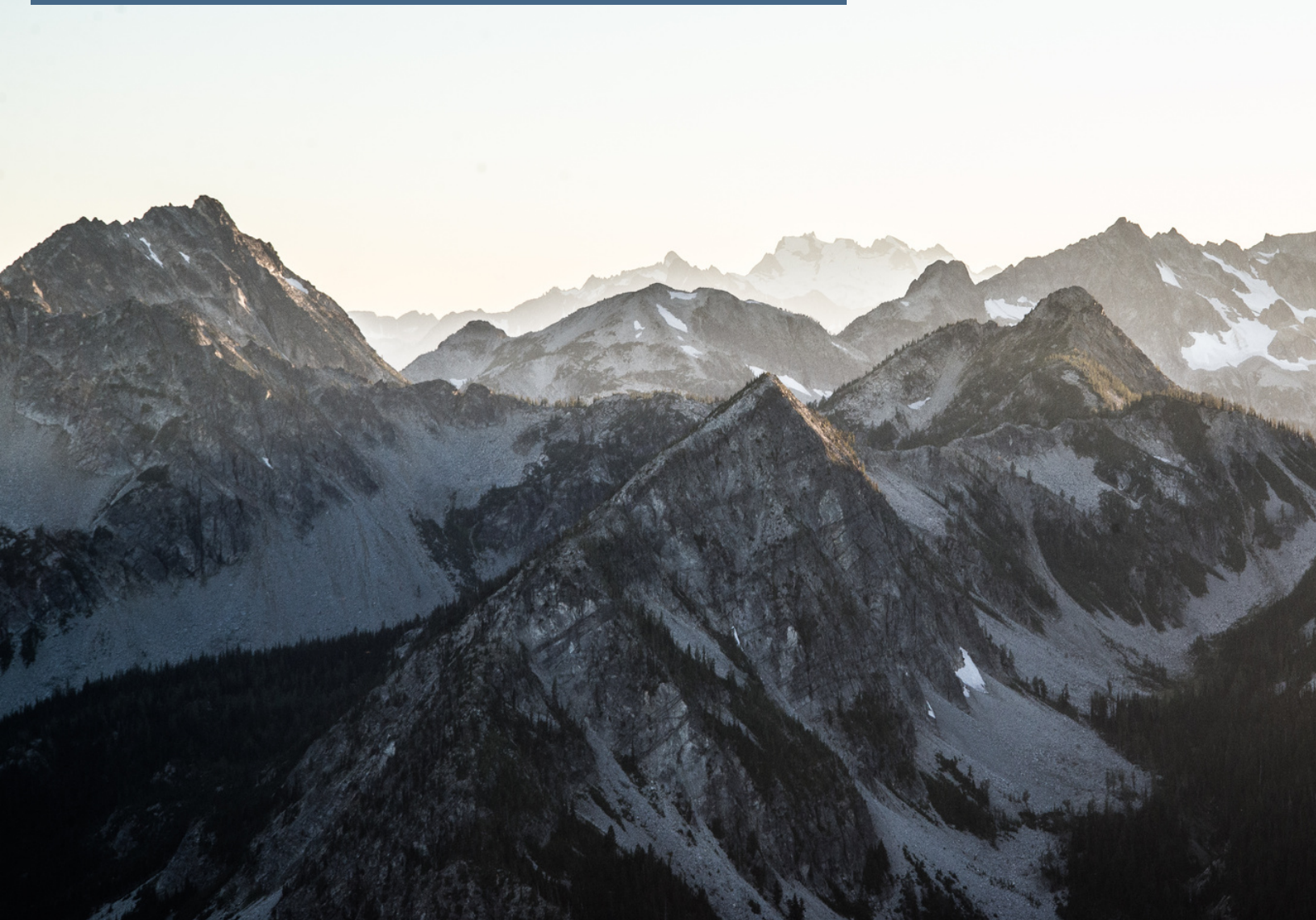


2023
REPORT TO THE
COMMUNITY



“When you don’t know what to do,
you know what to do - you learn.”

Ken Low, 1943-2023



2023 in Review

LAURA KENNETT
BOARD CHAIR

I can't think of a quote that has compelled our community more than the one on the cover page from Ken Low, founder of the Human Venture Institute and Human Venture Leadership. As with every year, 2023 was filled with learning. It was also a time of grieving following Ken's death on February 27, 2023.

We held a magnificent celebration of life for Ken at Fort Calgary in April, an opportunity to reconnect with so many people whose lives had been shaped by the learning they had encountered through him. It was special. I don't have words to describe how special it was but we do have pictures to share.

And then as Ken would have encouraged us, **we kept going**. We wrapped up the 2022-23 Pathfinders program, with course participants testing how to apply adaptive approaches to their own life engagements. Then Human Venture Pathfinders, Associates, and the board of Human Venture Leadership and the board of the Human Venture Institute gathered in Red Deer, Alberta, in the early summer to share those learnings and plan for the next year. It was a time of reflection and renewal, and an opportunity for us to demonstrate we could move ahead without Ken's physical presence.

Throughout 2023, both the Human Venture Leadership and Human Venture Institute boards invested considerable time to clarify the roles and functions of both organizations and make progress towards our strategic priorities.

In the fall of 2023, we began the design and development of a new program: Human Venture Foundations. Launched in January 2024, the program has been designed to synthesize and build on the introductory programs of the past, with the goal of providing an updated and concise overview of Human Learning Ecology.

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2023 in Review, Cont.

LAURA KENNETT
BOARD CHAIR

We closed out the year with our annual celebration of the northern hemisphere’s winter solstice – this time with in-person gatherings in Calgary and Edmonton, and individuals joining us online via live-stream from across North America.

Special thanks to Steacy Pinney and Alison Hagan for hosting, Nick Kalogirou for his moving piano performance, Mark Hopkins for delivering an inspired solstice message, and Chris Hsiung for sharing recorded wisdom from Cree elder Chief Billy Joe Laboucan.

We have also seen increasing engagement from you, our community members! Along with more requests for expanded programming (stay tuned for announcements later this year), community members stepped up with donations in support of Human Venture’s work, many of them giving in memory of Ken Low.

Your support has laid the groundwork for some promising progress in 2024. **Thank you!**

Acknowledgments

Twenty-one donors gave over \$3,170 in 2023 – we are incredibly grateful for your support. Thank you!

Thank you to Eleanor Finger for overseeing our communications and to Elizabeth Dozois for continuing to teach Human Learning Ecology constructs.

A special thank you to the family of Gay Bisanz, who created the Gay Bisanz Leadership Development Fund. This fund provides scholarships in perpetuity for participants of Human Venture Programs (formerly Leadership Edmonton programs). Gay passed away in 2005 after contributing to the development of Leadership Edmonton.



Looking Ahead: 2024 and Beyond

The discipline of Human Learning Ecology (HLE) is vital and transformative for the human species. It is a tool to help us understand the complex causes of our greatest opportunities and threats. It lays out a framework for our species to understand how we can learn to develop the capacities needed to respond to these opportunities and threats.

The challenge for our organization is demonstrating the value and impact of this powerful framework, in a world that favours simple answers and quick solutions. This is made more difficult by the fact that we are entirely volunteer-run. In the early months of 2024 however, we have already made some really promising progress on **our three strategic priorities**: adaptive capacity building; resource generation; and building credibility.

We look forward to seeing the results of the [Human Venture Foundations Introductory Program](#) that is currently running, and will soon be launching the [Human Venture Foundations Audio Course](#) – which we hope will attract increasing numbers of individuals to learn about Human Learning Ecology in an accessible, self-directed format.

We are already planning for next year's programs with the possibility of continuing to expand our offerings. We also aim to create more frequent communications, with the goal of providing valuable news and short-form learning content for the Human Venture community.

This is all possible because of dedicated volunteers, and our generous donors, whose financial support keeps our essential basic infrastructure running. And of course, we have tremendous resources in the form of maps, books, videos, and artifacts from Ken Low for us to build upon.

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Looking Ahead, Cont.

When people ask me what the Human Venture is, my reply is, “it’s not for the faint of heart.” Truth, and the discipline to inquire for truth, are hard work. And sometimes the truth and the process to find it can be extremely challenging at an individual level – let alone at an organizational or societal level. But as Ken always insisted, “we can’t make good decisions unless we understand the truth; a [false] story that makes us feel good can lead us to poor decisions.”

Ken was pointing to something larger than himself, bigger than all of us. He lit a fire in our bellies and now it burns bright. The boards of the Human Venture are excited to carry on equipping more people to explore the learning frontier. Ken’s work will carry on.

About Human Venture Leadership (HVL)

HVL is a registered charity which designs and delivers educational programs based on Human Learning Ecology. I encourage you to carefully read and reflect on the Human Venture’s purpose statement on the closing page. Each word is important.

HVL helps people learn and lead beyond convention. We zoom out on life and find the larger patterns associated with our species’ development across history to see the trajectory we are on. Applying Human Learning Ecology and a meta-framework helps us discern whether our trajectory is helpful or not.

Our board members are Laura Kennett (Chair), Mark Hopkins (Treasurer), Chris Hsiung (Secretary), Kim Rowe, and Alison Hagan. Board members play a hands-on role in supporting programs, fundraising, and engaging the community, while ensuring the good governance of the organization.

I want to acknowledge our sister organization, the Human Venture Institute, which focuses on expanding the research into, and development of, Human Learning Ecology. Its volunteer board members are: Dana Penrice (Co-chair), Natalie Muyres (Co-chair and Secretary), Jason Low (Treasurer), and Chris Hsiung.

Our Purpose Statement

We aim to support and promote adaptive development in both individuals and socio-cultural environments. Both are necessary to affect change: Socio-cultural environments shape us, effectively telling us what to believe, value, think and do. But those environments are created – so we can't hope to affect them without developing the capacities of individuals to see, think and care differently. Therefore, our purpose statement is two-fold. We exist to create and support a mutual learning community that will generate:

1. Increasing numbers of increasingly resourceful, resilient, responsible life-ranging human beings with diagnostic and design capabilities for reducing ignorance and error, waste, suffering and injustice at all levels, from individuals to civilization.
2. The creation of institutions, cultural and societal resources, leaders and ecologies of influence (locally and globally) that support the development and maintenance of systemic-adaptive capacities.

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