



ALBERTA ESPORTS ASSOCIATION



21

2020

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

JUNE 2020 to JULY 2021

A 15 YEAR GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT

LEAPING FORWARD

Growing up I struggled to find a peer group to belong with that shared my passion for both video games and competition. Participating in sports was difficult due to my asthma, so instead I was drawn towards other forms of competition like poker, speedcubing, and of course, video games.

In Fall 2006, at the age of 14 and with the support of my local library, I hosted my first video game tournament where players across Alberta showed up to participate. There I met my friend and future co-founding partner Brad Jones, and what would grow to become a 15 year grassroots movement took its first step into an unknown future.



Over the years, our grassroots gaming community continued to grow. More and more communities began to form as “esports” began to enter the mainstream. Our grassroots events outgrew our local libraries and began filling community and convention halls. Before we knew it, with just our free time, limited resources, and the support of our local community leaders, Brad & I found ourselves as the provinces largest esports event organizers, unifying thousands of gamers across Alberta to celebrate video games, competition, and community.

In Summer 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, Brad & I co-founded the Alberta Esports Association as a direct response to the growing needs of our local esports community at a fundamental level. Esports is a form of organized competition that desperately needed the infrastructure that traditional sports had: governance, industry & conduct standards, career & talent pathways, and a robust ecosystem conducive to long term sustainability and success.

With the support and collaboration of our network of grassroots organizers, industry leaders, government partners, corporate sponsors, and volunteers, we’ve begun leaping forward as a provincial leader in esports - shaped by the collective voices of the communities we serve.

We are so proud to share the impact our collective network has achieved together during our inaugural year, and how we managed to keep our communities connected and engaged during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you to everyone who contributed to and supported our organization and its initiatives. Let’s continue to connect, play, and grow, together. GLHF!

In friendship,



Victor Ly, P.Eng

President & Co-Founder, Alberta Esports Association

A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

ALBERTA ESPORTS ASSOCIATION



Alberta Esports Association (AESA) is a non-profit organization dedicated towards fostering the growth and development of esports within Alberta, Canada.

OUR MISSION

To foster the growth and development of esports within Alberta and facilitate the best events, communities, and players.

OUR VISION

To establish Alberta as a recognized esports leader by cultivating local talent, developing industry opportunities, and building cohesive governing infrastructure.

"It's an exciting time. Keep up the momentum, we're cheering you on."

- Doug Schweitzer, Minister of Jobs, Economy, & Innovation
Opening Remarks at Edmonton Direct 2021

"An exciting, dynamic, and in our current pandemic, safe way to get involved with the digital interactive media ecosystem."

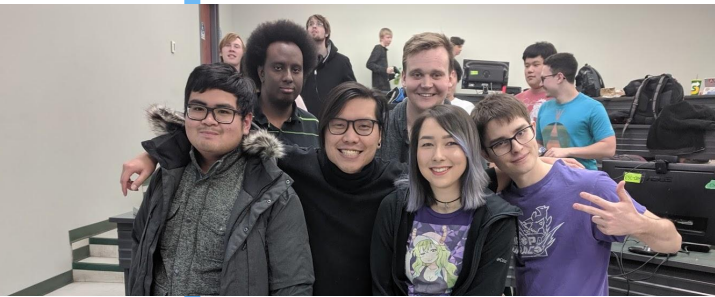
- Don Iveson, Former Mayor of the City of Edmonton,
Opening Remarks at Edmonton Direct 2021



LED AND SHAPED BY OUR CORE VALUES

COLLABORATION

We have a commitment to work with local communities and industry partners to create a unified Alberta esports experience.



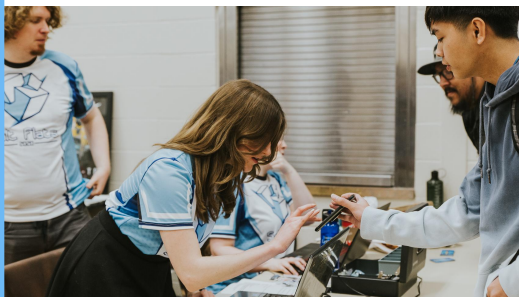
INCLUSION

We recognize and empathize with the unique experiences of individuals. We are committed to fostering a diverse community and culture of inclusion and accessibility.



GROWTH

We believe that the heart of Esports is in bringing people together, and creating opportunities to evolve both in scale and quality.



ACCOUNTABILITY

We believe in the integrity of our work and the safety of our communities. We are committed to ensuring our standards and best practices are met both by our organization and by our partners, while operating with transparency.



PLAY

We know how much fun gaming can be. We exist to share that sense of entertainment and celebrate the thrill of competition for players of all ages throughout Alberta in a safe and supportive environment.

A DIGITAL SPORTING PARADIGM

ESPORTS



Esports, or “electronic sports”, is a form of organized competition based around multiplayer video games that feature competitive elements and a strong fanbase.

WHY ESPORTS

Esports is a global billion dollar industry that merges the sport and interactive digital media sectors, offering new economic and social opportunities around an underserved market of gamers seeking competition, compelling content, careers, & community.

WHY AESA

AESA is a provincial governing body that unites the ecosystem, providing regulatory oversight, industry advocacy, community building initiatives, event organization and facilitation, and a connection to the National and International stage.

“Esports promote many of the same values present in traditional sports such as teamwork, sportsmanship, strategy, and communication. Esports encourage perseverance, self-growth while boosting personal confidence. Competition can foster a feeling of pride and connection amongst competitors.”

- Edmonton Public Schools Esports



OUR FIRST YEAR 2020 RECAP

"We've made so much progress in just our first year. That unprecedented growth is proof of the social & economic opportunity esports brings to Alberta."
- Ryan Coutts, Business Development, AESA

Building **COMMUNITIES**

United more than **20 COMMUNITIES** & over **20,000 GAMERS**

Established **CODE OF CONDUCT & SAFE ESPORTS**

Provided free & accessible **HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAMS**

Engaging **STUDENTS**

Alberta's **FIRST ACCREDITED** esports academic program

Alberta's **FIRST INTERCOLLEGIATE** esports tournament

Alberta's **LARGEST INTERSCHOLASTIC** esports tournament

Facilitating **EVENTS**

4 VIRTUAL EVENTS with an average of over **400 COMPETITORS**

Collective total of **14,116 LIVE VIEWS & 5,419 HRS WATCHED**

Historically the **LARGEST ESPORTS EVENTS** in Alberta

Leading **INDUSTRY**

CANADA'S FIRST Provincial Esports Association

Provincial Member of **CANADA ESPORTS ASSOCIATION**

Provincial Partner on the **ALBERTA ESPORTS STRATEGY**



BUILDING COMMUNITIES

"At every level of play, we're raising the standards for the health of our communities and breaking down dysfunctional beliefs in gaming culture. All so we can keep doing what we love: coming together and playing our favorite games!"
- Kristen Kieu, Health & Wellness, AESA



TOURNAMENT ARC 2020 - EDMONTON, AB

"We look forward to working alongside AESA to bring mental health into the forefront of esports community building." - Giri Puligandla, Executive Director, Canadian Mental Health Association - Edmonton Region

"AESA has impacted my role as a local tournament organizer into a unified, professional & supportive community leader. They've stood by the belief that video games are for everyone and that any individual or game is included and welcomed."
- Michael "ChinatownG" Gee, Community Leader

"AESA became a pillar to our communities, inspiring us to do better and grow, something that we needed during the pandemic."
- Juan "Juancino" Lopez, Community Leader

"The multi-faced challenges that this emerging sport and culture brings day-to-day is puzzling and AESA has been nothing short of superb in how they have always placed a sense of community and the mental wellbeing as a cornerstone of their organizational culture." - Jonathan Charest, Director of Athlete Sleep Services, Centre for Sleep & Human Performance, Calgary

"Although we started out as a small-scale group, AESA has brought us the support we needed to legitimize and grow our scene. These events have enabled us to meet new players and develop relationships that continue to help our small community thrive."
- Kyle "Mr. Kyle" Terrence Community Leader

AESA unified over **20 local communities**, student groups, & grassroots organizers across Alberta - uniting **20,000+ gamers**.

AESA established a comprehensive **code of conduct** and compliance model to provide regulatory oversight and a safe environment for players - Safe Esports.

AESA provided free **health & wellness programs** in partnership with local professionals through creative content, access to resources, & speaker panels.

AESA's diverse team includes working healthcare professionals and members certified in mental health first aid & ASIST.

AESA hosted **speaker panels** with local professionals on topics such as: mental health, women in leadership, game design & development and industry pathways.

AESA **empowered community leaders** & grassroots organizers by improving local cohesion, bringing visibility, providing training & development, supporting their growth, and highlighting their successes.

ENGAGING STUDENTS

"I have had the freedom to bring esports to schools and students in order to provide opportunity, education, and access to the wider esports community. This was something I wish I had when I was in High School."
- Kurt Robertson, Community Outreach, AESA

EPS ESPORTS SPRING 2021 - EDMONTON, AB



AESA held Alberta's **first intercollegiate esports** tournament in partnership with the Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference, where **8 post-secondary institutions** competed to 433 live viewers.

AESA held the **largest interscholastic esports** tournament in Alberta in partnership with Edmonton Public Schools Esports. **132 students** across 22 schools competed to 3,061 live viewers, with student volunteers gaining **direct industry experience** as event organizers & casters.

The Co-Founders of AESA delivered Alberta's **first accredited esports academic program** as Contract Instructors at Mount Royal University.

AESA hosted **post-secondary panels** tied to the interactive digital media sector, including speakers from the University of Alberta, NorQuest College, Mount Royal University, Lethbridge College, and NAIT.

AESA hosted the 2021 University of Alberta Certificate in Computer Game Development **Awards Ceremony**.

"AESA and Edmonton Public Schools Esports share a common goal of community building. Over the past year, AESA helped us grow our community connecting us with critical community partners - which in turn contributed to the creation of impactful opportunities for our students. On behalf of Edmonton Public Schools Esports, I would like to thank AESA for their contribution to esports in our province, and the positive effect that it has had for our students."

- Corbett Artym, Esports Committee Chair, Edmonton Public Schools Esports

"We were glad to align with a partner that cared about the gamers and gaming community, and showed a lot of passion in what they do."

- Anthony Wong, Manager of Operations,, Alberta Colleges Athletics Conference

"I've been over the moon with how it went and I'm so glad I was a part of it."

- University Student, Concordia University of Edmonton

"Please keep it up, as this is something I've always dreamed about as a kid and even now."

- Alumni Coach, Harry Ainlay High School

"It was really fun to watch my friends and other schools compete in a really professional environment."

- High School Student, Old Scona Academic

FACILITATING EVENTS

"We have been able to take something I have cherished my whole life, and produce opportunities for growth at a personal and professional level. I get to pay people for something I grew up volunteering countless hours towards."
- Brad Jones, Vice President & Co-Founder, AESA

SALT FLATS 2020 - CALGARY, AB



"Their mission to create a safe space for competitive gamers of all ages is where our two organizations align. AESA's unwavering commitment to charity on top of creating these positive experiences is why we continue to partner with them year after year."

- Lisa Hawthorne, President, Extra Life Edmonton

"Every event is a testament to their innovation - setting the stage for new games, communities, and creators alike to make their mark."

- Xavier "Sa-v" Davidson, Artist

"These events turn from just playing the game we all thought was the reason we attended in the first place, to a bridge that forms the foundation for deep & meaningful relationships within the community, as it has for myself."

- Ho-Sung "Canakrn" Rho, Community Leader

"I have known most of my life I wanted to do esports as a career path but I could never figure out how to warp the lay of the land to make it a reality, and then boom the Alberta Esports Association comes in and terraforms it."

- Rowan "Red" Duvall, Tournament Organizer & Caster

"Within these events I've seen people create close bonds with each other. This is what motivates me - to continue bringing this joy in people's lives!"

- Kevin "iNomx4" Fulgencio, Tournament Organizer

AESA's Co-Founders were the **largest esports event organizers** in Alberta leading up to AESA's incorporation.

AESA held **4 flagship events** in its first year, grandfathered in from the events of the Co-Founders and successfully pivoted from in-person to virtual due to COVID-19.

AESA's events were **volunteer driven** and **free to enter** for both competitors and spectators, removing all barriers of entry for participants during COVID-19.

AESA's flagship events averaged over **400 competitors** from across out outside of Alberta, and a collective total of **14,116 live views** and **5,419 hrs watched**.

AESA's events featured **tournaments, speaker panels, and community features** to capture the in-person tournament experience in a virtual environment.

AESA partnered and supported local organizations with events along with these flagship events, creating **89 contract job positions** locally.

LEADING INDUSTRY

"As the first of our kind in Canada it is important that we focus not only on producing quality events, but also giving careful consideration in building the most holistic, inclusive and collaborative vision of esports we can."
- Jordan Sekiya, Director of Compliance, AESA



SALT FLATS 2020 -CALGARY, AB

AESA is Canada's **first provincial esports association** composed of diverse industry stakeholders - bridging the gap between government and community.

AESA is the first provincial member of the **Canada Esports Association**, recognized by the **Global Esports Federation** that convenes the world's esports community. AESA connects our province with the national and international esports stage.

AESA **improved cohesion of the local esports ecosystem** by identifying and strategically aligning esports industry and community nodes across Alberta.

AESA is supporting key provincial partners in economic development and tourism in the development of an **Alberta Esports Strategy** - a province-wide reaching strategy to build a recognized, robust and sustainable esports ecosystem in Alberta.

AESA's **Code of Conduct** has been utilized and referenced by esports communities around the world, from other provinces like B.C., to regions as far as Australia.

"AESA is an industry leader that has pioneered a holistic, inclusive and sustainable approach to the development of Esports. Their model serves as a best practice not only for gamers, but across all disciplines of sport."

- Richard Maclennan, Field Marketing Specialist, Events and Activations, Red Bull Canada

"The esports industry is quickly taking off around the world, and we are proud to support AESA."

- Erika Carrasco, Partner and Chair of the Emerging Technology practice at Field Law

"It's reassuring knowing that you have a provincial esports association that's not only building an inclusive and safe community, but working with industry partners and sponsors that support the long-term sustainability of the space."

- Cory Sellar, Marketing & Communications Specialist, Innovate Edmonton

"We want to support AESA as much as we can because we believe they are capable of making meaningful change within the esports industry."

- Mat de Moissac & Alex Schinke, Mindbuffs - Sports & Performance Psychology

"When working on a Code of Conduct ... we ended up referencing the AESA Code of Conduct to guide its development. I am sincere in saying that I have a genuine respect for AESA's approach to fostering positive gaming communities."

- Alethea "Alecat" Lim, Oceanink Squids, Australia

INVESTING IN AESA MEANS INVESTING IN ALBERTA ESPORTS

SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

Year ended June 30, 2021 for our inaugural year.

REVENUE

2020

Sponsorship	\$58,957.73
Sales	\$17,726.18
Grants & Donations	\$2881.38
Other Income	\$284.91
Total Revenue	\$79,850.29

EXPENDITURES

2020

Events & Programs	\$28,969.77
Administration	\$2,897.76
Dues & Fees	\$2,244.39
Other Expenses	\$1127.57
Total Expenditures	\$35,239.49

Revenue over Expenditures* Excess (Deficiency)	\$44,610.80
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THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

"We are so grateful for the support of our annual pillar sponsors who share our vision and recognize that sponsoring AESA means investing directly in Alberta's esports industry and community."
- Victor Ly, President & Co-Founder, AESA



"Seeing how you've all grown as individuals and professionals this past year has been incredible. It's truly a testament to your hard work that has led AESA to be such a successful front-facing organization, and I cannot wait to see what happens next."

- Steve Orillion, Esports Marketing & Partnerships Manager, The Gaming Stadium

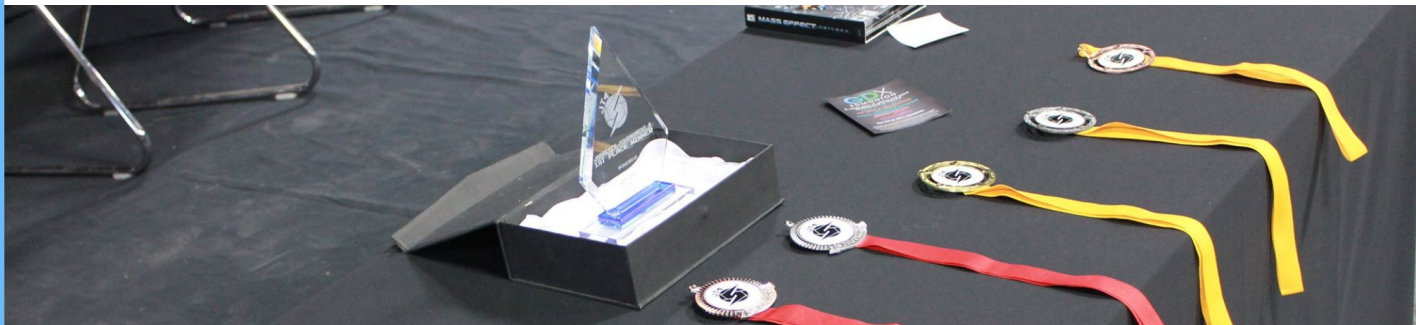
"AESA has proven to be a leader in the Canadian grassroots gaming industry. They strive to have a fully inclusive and accessible community. It has been a true pleasure to work with their entire crew."

- Caghan Bonnough, Senior Market Manager, Esports & Gaming, TELUS



"We are proud to support AESA and their efforts in Alberta. The world of esports can be complex from a legal perspective, and we are looking forward to providing leadership, counsel and support for this emerging industry."

- Erika Carrasco, Partner and Chair of the Emerging Technology practice at Field Law



THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS



Event Sponsors

Super Smashing COVID | May 22-24, 2020

Partner | Memory Express | Logitech | Vancouver Street Battle | Red Bull Canada

Salt Mines 2020 | Oct 10-11, 2020

Sponsors | Herband | Memory Express | NorQuest College | World One | Red Bull Canada

AESA Extra Life Game Day 2020 - 24hr Fundraiser | Nov 7-8, 2020

Partner | Extra Life Edmonton | Extra Life Calgary | **Sponsors** | Digital Alberta | Endless Era Gaming | Mindbuffs | Red Bull Canada

Salt Flats 2021 Presented by TELUS | Feb 13-14, 2021

Title | TELUS | **Gold** | Brightside by ATB | The Gaming Stadium | Explore Edmonton

Silver | Herband | Memory Express | United Way Calgary and Area | Red Bull Canada

Edmonton Public Schools Esports - Spring 2021 | Mar 13-14 & 20-21, 2021

The Gaming Stadium | Herband | Sportfactor

Edmonton Direct 2021 | May 15-16, 2021

Partner | Edmonton Screen Industries Office | **Gold** | Alberta Innovates | Bitcoin Well | Caldera Interactive | Edmonton Regional Innovation Network | Seagate Gaming | TELUS | The Gaming Stadium | **Silver** | BioWare | Explore Edmonton | Red Bull Canada

Event Speakers & Panelists

Opening Remarks

Doug Schweitzer Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation | Don Iveson Former Mayor of Edmonton | Andrew Knack Edmonton City Councillor | Peggy Garrity Board Chair, Edmonton Screens Industries Office & Chancellor, University of Alberta

Award Presenters

Aaryn Flynn, Deanna Dombroski, David Holmes Improbable | Amy Mallon, Glenn Meyer BioWare | Mai-Thy Le | Shelby Carleton Sledgehammer Games | Dr. Nathan Sturtevant, Dr. Matt Bouchard, Dr. Michael Bowling University of Alberta

Speakers & Panelists

Alex Grove, Kevin MacAlpine, Gibreal Sawh, Corbett Artym, Randolph Su Edmonton Public Schools | Alex Remondini, Erika Carrasco Field Law | Alyson Cikor Lethbridge College | Amanda Adkins The Mustard Seed Edmonton | Andrew Czarnietzki, Jen Laface Only by Midnight | Anderoo | April Stallings Make-A-Wish | Artful Hobbes | Azraelxx | Baldwin Li Gamers for Groceries | Caghan Bonnough TELUS | Chris Ansell | Craig Pfau | Crystal McCord, Kat Barkwell, Kevin Meek, Melanie Faulknor, Sheryl Chee BioWare | David Holmes, Tina Seal Improbable | Derek McCurdy NorQuest College | Don "2ManyCooks" Bartlett Elise Ledwon Porzellan Props | Elyse Cathrea Canadian Mental Health Association - Edmonton | Fernando Melo Double Blit Games | Gobrinz | Jace Boechler Schadenfreude | Jamie Hensel | Jerilyn Dressler Distress Centre Calgary | Jeff Cho Caldera Interactive | Jimbo | John Winski NAIT | Kazz | Kyle Kulyk Itzy Interactive | Kyle Terrence | Lisa Hawthorne Extra Life Edmonton LumptyTouch | Madison Côté, Tom Viinikka Edmonton Screens Industries Office | Mark Darrah | Mileve | Mohan Singh | Nick Fury | Nickography | Onyx | Phen | Proton Jon | Ravyn Hardcastle | Rebecca Deveau Edmonton Community Meetup, Powered by Twitch | Ryan Bromsgrove Polar Tabby Interactive | Sam "Lolaf" Geyer | Dr. Sean Gouglas University of Alberta | Scott "broknecho" Wilson | Trent Oster, Misia Blonziar Beamdog | Yoko | Xavier "Sa-v" Davidson | Zelour

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS



Health & Wellness Initiatives

Led by Kristen Kieu & Jordan Sekiya AESA | Mat de Moissac & Alex Schinke Mindbuffs Sport & Performance Psychology
Jonathan Charest Centre for Sleep & Human Performance | Giri Puligandla Canadian Mental Health Association - Edmonton Region

Academic & Athletic Initiatives

Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference ACAC Collegiate Esports Kick-Off | Edmonton Public Schools Esports EPS Esports
Edmonton Stingers Stingers Gaming | Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) Trojan Esports Showcase Series

Industry Initiatives

Alberta Esports Strategy

Calgary Economic Development | Tourism Calgary | Edmonton Screen Industries Office | Explore Edmonton | Edmonton Global

Edmonton Direct 2021

Edmonton Screen Industries Office | Alberta Innovates | University of Alberta Certificate in Computer Game Development

AESA Insight Podcast Guests

Hosted by Thai Sirikoone AESA | Noah "Nurse" Stobbe | Ezekiel "Zeke" Torres | Lisa "Leetsah" Hawthorne, Karman "Aeriee" Ngan,
GrimWulf Extra Life Edmonton | Todd Willsie, Cody "Lights" Harbidge Extra Life Calgary | Christopher "Kally" Musick, Xavier "Sa-v"
Davidson Rivals of Alberta | Kyle "Mr. Kyle" Terrence, Jamie "Rat King" Hensel 3rd Strike Academy | Tekuno, Yoko Alberta Squid Squad

Community Initiatives Supported:

Extra Life Calgary Extra Life Game Day | Extra Life Edmonton Extra Life Game Day | Memory Express Super Smashing COVID
Make-A-Wish Canada Stream for the Wishes | The Mustard Seed Edmonton Hope 2 Game | Startup Edmonton DevCon 2021
Grande Prairie Regional Hospital Foundation Gaming 4 Good | Edmonton Public Library Stanley A. Milner Library Gamerspace

Esports Communities

3rd Strike Academy | Alberta First Person Shooters | Alberta Melee Netp | Alberta Real Time Strategy | Alberta Squid Swap | Calgary
Halo Calgary Smash Community | Club N3rd at Mount Royal University | Fighting Game Community of Calgary | Edmonton Fighting
Game Community | Edmonton Smash Community | Grande Prairie Smash Community | Bridge Esports in Lethbridge | Medicine Hat
Smash Community | NAIT Fighting Games Club | NAIT Smash Club | PokéSports Alberta | Red Deer Fighting Game Community
Rivals of Alberta | University of Alberta Esports Association | University of Alberta Smash Club | Western Canada DBFZ Community

Proud Member of

Canada Esports Association | Global Esports Federation | Edmonton Regional Innovation Network | Sport Calgary

Special Thanks To

Aaryn Flynn | Andrew Simon | Anthony Wong | Brad Mahon | Caghan Bonnough | Charmaine Crooks | Corbett Artym | Cory Sellar | David Benson
David Legg | Derek Kwan | Erika Carrasco | Ezekiel Torres | Hanna Choi | Jace Boechler | Kari Gordon | Kristin Yarish | Lisa Hawthorne | Madison Côté
Nicholas Diaz | Richard Maclennan | Scott Nye | Scott Wilson | Steve Orillion | Stuart Kinnear | Terry Booth | Thomas Battle | Xavier Davidson

THANK YOU FROM **OUR TEAM**



Board of Directors

Victor "Victra" Ly, P.Eng - President & Co-Founder

Brad "Bread" Jones - Vice President & Co-Founder

Mandy "Bubz" Lee, CPA - Treasurer

Courtney "SpacedOutBlonde" Nickerson, CAPM - Secretary & Administrator

Jordan "Aletheia" Sekiya, CPHR Candidate - Director of Compliance & Human Resources Lead

Executives

Alex "Nullex" Schafer - Events

Ash "Ash Rao" Rao - Media

Kristen "Kieutea" Kieu, MScOT - Health & Wellness

Kurt "Ashley" Robertson - Community

Ryan "Ace" Coutts - Business Development

Tina "ShadowMisstep" Sang - Public Relations

Volunteers

Aaron "TinOfSalsa" Stephanyshyn | Alex "Anderoo" Ursino | Amelia "Unorthodox" Simmonds

Andrew "HongKongDisco" Tran | Eric "Bees" Morton | Justin "JustinMcGhost" Aughtry

Kara "KaramelKat" Dulay | Marc "Mahuru" Bendico | Mike "Versa" Yau | Rachel "Recheche" Djeric

Sam "Lolaf" Geyer | Thai "Thai Sirikoone" Sirikoone | Ty "Digital" Tomasta | Wyatt "Deflate" James

Photo Credits

Analog Squad | Edmonton Public Schools Esports | Joanna Lok | Philippe Massicotte



For more information on the Alberta Esports Association,
visit esportsalberta.ca or email contact@esportsalberta.ca