



## **The Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA)**

**Compendium of Plans, Programmes, and Activities of SLAA  
During The Presidency of Dr. Abu Conteh and his Executive Committee**

January, 2019 – August, 2024

Compiled and written by:  
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# Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA)



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Sierra Leone Community Multi-Purpose Centre  
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## Message from the President



Dr. Abu Conteh,  
SLAA Community President

**G**reetings to you, my Dear Readers:

As President of The Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA) from January, 2019 to August, 2024, and on behalf of my Executive Committee and the entire membership of said association, I present to you this first-ever SLAA Compendium. What you are now looking at is a document which is available in both print and electronic forms.

The idea is to provide a one-stop resource material. It was conceived and published as a concise report on the plans, programmes, and activities of SLAA. The focus is on the internal and external dynamics of this association for the purposes of clarity, transparency, and easy access. Hopefully, its contents

(text, photographs, and weblinks to articles and videos) would serve as reference materials for now and for posterity.

My two terms in office as Community President of SLAA have rolled by so quickly. I must express gratitude to God Almighty for granting us the opportunity to serve our community, and to community members for the confidence they had in voting me into office. I and the other Executive Committee Members whom I appointed took up responsibility on January 11, 2019, initially for a two-year term.

I campaigned and came into office on a 14-Point Plan. In one year, my Executive team, our dedicated volunteers, and I, were blessed to have accomplished more than

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half of our plans. These include the first ever Census of the Sierra Leone Community in Alberta – which results are now being used to adequately plan for, and better serve our community. In addition to our Community WhatsApp Forum, my Executive Committee has developed our first-ever community website (<https://sierraleonealberta.ca/>) and community newsletter (SLAA Newsletter).

Our appreciation goes to the Government of Alberta for providing partial funding under the CIP Project-based Grant for the purchase of our first community-owned vehicle. With funding from the Government of Canada, under the New Horizons for Seniors Programs (NHSP), my executive is providing support to our seniors under our project entitled Promoting the Health of Seniors in the Sierra Leone Community. The Government of Canada provided us with a retrofitting grant under the Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative (SBCCI) Programme which enabled us to secure our Community Multi-Purpose Centre. This facility houses a main hall space, a secretariat, and a mezzanine for seminars/workshops. Our gratitude also goes to Santas Anonymous for providing us with Christmas gifts.

My executive has maintained the routine socio-cultural and religious activities in our community. These include the Annual Flag-Raising Ceremony and celebration of Sierra Leone's Independence Anniversary, Annual Community Picnic, Edmonton Heritage Festival, Eid Celebrations and other Islamic events like community-wide Iftar (Breakfast) and Lai-la-tul Qadr (Night of Power), and Christmas celebrations including Nine Lessons and Carols, distribution of gifts, and feasting.

Furthermore, a few rounds of food hampers and gift cards were secured and distributed. Also, we

have held the Inaugural SLAA Presidential Awards Ceremony in 2024. A Government of Sierra Leone Consular Service exists here in Canada.

The other platform points are ongoing. These include networking with Sierra Leoneans in other provinces, linking new community members to available resources, delivering our Education Support Programmes (including after-school tutorials and The Brain of SLAA Quiz Contest), building on our Values Project (including community panel discussions on topical issues), and reviving our Sponsorship Holder Agreement with the Government of Canada. We also maintain interactions with the various levels of government (municipal, provincial, and federal) and other agencies and community organizations like Sinkunia Community Development Organization, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Edmonton Multicultural Coalition, CAUSE Canada, Action for Healthy Communities, Africa Centre, Black Canadian Women In Action Society, and National Black Coalition of Canada. On behalf of the entire SLAA Membership, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Government of Canada for providing the funding for this project, through its SBCCI grant.

Your feedback is most welcome on this modest effort in communication by our beloved community association.

Thank you.

**Abu Conteh, PhD.**

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## Background

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Dr. Abu Conteh, President of The Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA), came into office on Friday 11 January, 2019. This followed his victory at a Community Presidential Election held in Edmonton, Alberta, on Saturday 27 October 2018. The objective of this poll was to elect a president who will then select individuals within our community that are credible and competent enough to serve as Board Members, otherwise referred to as Executives Members according to the association's bylaws. Dr. Conteh has since led the association, with the help of a team of executives and volunteers.

Every year, an Annual Report was presented by Dr. Conteh to community members at our Annual General Meetings (AGMs). This compendium is a compilation of the details contained in the successive Annual Reports. In essence, this SLAA Compendium is a report on the status of the association during the entire term of office of the Executive Committee headed by Dr. Abu Conteh as Community President.

At each of his Annual Reports, presented at AGMs of this association, Community President Dr. Abu Conteh updates the membership on the state of the association. These reports are typically complemented by Financial Reports. The SLAA Executive Committee also invites presentations from various committees set up to implement SLAA programmes, projects, and related activities.

Dr. Conteh would recall the 14 different categories of programs or plans on which he ran for the presidency of SLAA in October 2018. He would also acknowledge members of his executive committee, the corps of dedicated SLAA volunteers, and other stakeholders as key players in the implementation of these plans and programmes during his tenure as Community President.

Taking one plan/project at a time, and with the aid of projected slides, the president would brief SLAA Members on its rationale, status or progress made so far, and the prospects in its implementation.

The 14 plans, programmes, and/or projects, are as follows:

1. Census
2. Hall Acquisition
3. Consular Services
4. Social, Cultural, and Religious Projects
5. Immigration and Skilled Workers' Project
6. Networking with Sierra Leoneans in other provinces
7. Linking New Sierra Leoneans to available resources
8. Networking with various levels of government (municipal, provincial, federal)
9. Values Project (focus on instilling and promoting respect, compassion, etc.)
10. Awards
11. Newsletter & Website
12. Education Foundation
13. Support for Seniors
14. Vehicle Acquisition

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## 1. census

- A census of members of SLAA is a first step in planning effectively and implementing all the other plans efficiently. SLAA carried out its first ever census of members in 2019.
- The exercise obtained key demographic characteristics of each adult member and his/her family/ household members. Details like age range, gender, educational background, employment status and occupation were sought.
- Also, respondents were asked about their emotional or psychological feelings, and their perceptions of SLAA as their community organization.
- This project was funded jointly by SLAA and The Sinkunia Community Development Organization, a non-profit which is also based in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.
- At the 2019 SLAA AGM, the president proudly announced that this project is now complete. The results were analyzed by Mr. Alimamy Mansaray, who is also an SLAA member.



Figure 1-1: Alimamy Mansaray presenting his analysis of the SLAA Census at the AGM in 2019

- The president acknowledged Mr. Mansaray (present at the AGM) for his voluntary services in analyzing the findings. Mr. Mansaray later made a formal presentation of his analysis to the meeting.
- This census has helped us in our community needs assessments which in turn have been invaluable in our various applications for grants (municipal, provincial, federal).

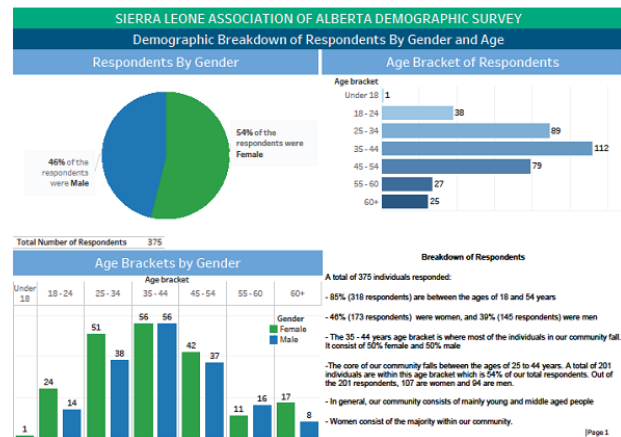


Figure 1-2: SLAA Census Results - 2019

- Among highlights of the census findings was that there were slightly more women than men in the SLAA population (54% versus 46%).
- Please click on the following link for a concise report on this Platform Point #1 (Census):  
[https://youtu.be/iuCjLPbVP\\_0?si=n4Fp9EOK06EN3Nzu](https://youtu.be/iuCjLPbVP_0?si=n4Fp9EOK06EN3Nzu)

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## 2. Hall Acquisition

- The acquisition of a community hall has been long overdue and cannot be overemphasized.
- Among its many benefits, the association will save money in the long run, if SLAA has its own hall and stops paying rental fees each time we have a meeting or some other functions for which SLAA requires the use of a hall.
- While preparing for the acquisition of a hall, the current executive committee secured an office space at the Clareview Multicultural Centre in 2019. It was the first-ever secretariat of the association.
- With funding from the Government of Canada, we were able to secure a facility that now serves as our multi-purpose community centre.
- The place serves as an administrative hub and a base for our socio-cultural and religious activities.
- Here is a collection of photographs of the SLAA centre, including some showing the retrofitting phase.



Figure 2-1: Invitation to Hall Opening Ceremony



Figure 2-2: Front Entrance of Community Multi-purpose Centre

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Figure 2-3: Cutting of the ribbon - Opening Ceremony of The SLAA Community Multi-purpose Centre



Figure 2-4: Pouring of libation during the Opening Ceremony of The SLAA Multi-purpose Community Centre



Figure 2-5: Reception Area - SLAA Community Multi-purpose Centre



Figure 2-6: Community Members in the reception area of the centre during the opening ceremony



Figure 2-7: The Reception Area of the Hall

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Figure 2-8: Some guests and hosts during the opening ceremony of the community centre



Figure 2-9: Back of Hall (showing stairway to Mezzanine on the left and Kitchenette on the right)



Figure 2-10: Back of Hall with Video-Journalist during the opening ceremony of the community centre



Figure 2-11: Back of Hall with Photo-Journalist during the opening ceremony of the community centre



Figure 2-12: SLAA President being interviewed by Global News during the Opening Ceremony of the centre



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Figure 2-13: The SLAA President addressing the audience during the Opening Ceremony of the SLAA Community Multi-purpose Centre



Figure 2-14: Handing over of keys during the Opening Ceremony of our SLAA Multi-purpose Community Centre

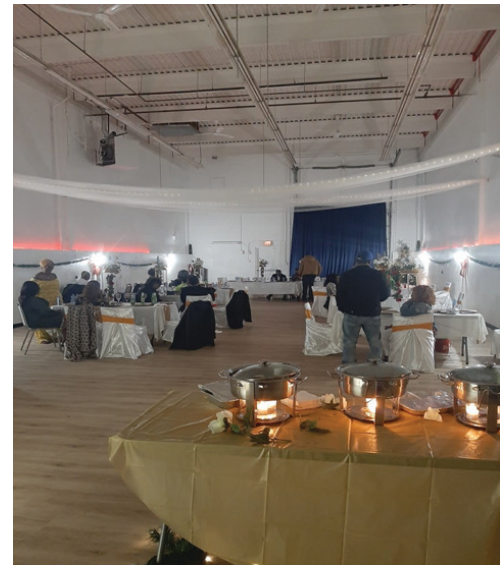


Figure 2-17: The centre in use for a dinner (with High Table at the front)



Figure 2-15: Inauguration of the SLAA Executive in October, 2022 at The SLAA Community Multi-purpose Centre



Figure 2-16: The centre in use for a dinner (Looking toward the back)

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Figure 2-18: The centre set up for an award ceremony



Figure 2-19: The centre in use for an award ceremony



Figure 2 -20: The centre being used for a Birthday Party



Figure 2-21: Mezzanine being used for workshops

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## 3. Consular

- Even though we have thousands of Sierra Leoneans living in Canada, there is only one embassy in the USA that is serving Sierra Leoneans living in both countries. Sierra Leoneans living in Alberta have only this embassy, in Washington DC., to access consular and other diplomatic services.
- Among the many benefits of having the country's consular services closer to us in Edmonton and other parts of Alberta, which is the primary purpose of this SLAA project, is the ease in obtaining or renewing passports with the Government of Sierra Leone.
- The SLAA President and his executive team are currently advocating for consular services in this part of Canada. In his report, delivered at the association's 2019 AGM, Dr. Conteh noted that a consular service does not necessarily require an office, for the consular official to carry out his/her duties. He added that an Alberta-based Sierra Leone Consul can even have another job or operate his/her own business, while running the consular affairs of the Government of Sierra Leone.
- We have also reached out for recognition by the Embassy which has now been received (See YouTube video below).
- A consular service exists in Ottawa, Canada, headed by Hon. David Pratt.



*Figure 3-1: The building housing the Sierra Leone Consular Office in Ottawa, Canada*

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EMBASSY OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE  
1701 19th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20009



Tel: (202) 939-9261 / 9262 / 9263  
Fax: (202) 483-1793  
[www.embassyofsierraleone.net](http://www.embassyofsierraleone.net)

16<sup>th</sup> December, 2021

Dr. Abu Conteh  
Community President  
Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA)  
Clareview Multicultural Centre, Office #2,  
3804 - 139 Avenue,  
Edmonton, AB. T5Y 3G4  
[slaa.ca\\_sierraleoneedmonton@gmail.com](mailto:slaa.ca_sierraleoneedmonton@gmail.com)

Dear Sir,

Letter of Recognition

I write to acknowledge with thanks and appreciation, the receipt of your letter of request for recognition of the Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA) which has been in existence for twenty years. We are highly impressed by the activities of SLAA over the years particularly in the areas of seeking the welfare of our compatriots both in Canada and Sierra Leone.

As Embassy, we value the contributions of the diaspora to the socio-economic development of Sierra Leone. In that regard, we are delighted to officially recognize the Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA) and it is now on the Embassy's mailing list of Sierra Leone Community Organizations.

We are also requesting that you keep the Embassy informed about any activity that your organization will be undertaking in the future so that the embassy can fully participate.

The Embassy would like to inform you that there is a Consul of Sierra Leone in Ottawa, Canada. The Embassy would like to inform you that Hon. David Pratt is the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Sierra Leone in Canada. You can reach the Honorary Consul at the following address:

350 Sparks Street, Suite 605, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1R 7S8  
email: [david.pratt@dpa.ltd](mailto:david.pratt@dpa.ltd) or [david@davidprattandassociates.ca](mailto:david@davidprattandassociates.ca)

You can also contact the embassy at [diaspora.coordinator@us.slembassy.gov.sl](mailto:diaspora.coordinator@us.slembassy.gov.sl) or phone: 202-939-9261 Extension 115/140 or 571-275-3882.

Sincerely,

Rachel Horner  
Diaspora Affairs Coordinator

CC: Hon. David Pratt,  
Honorary Consul of the Republic of Sierra Leone

Figure 3-2: Letter of Recognition from The Embassy of The Republic of Sierra Leone, Washington, DC

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## TOWN HALL MEETING!

DATE: SATURDAY OCTOBER 21ST 2023

PLACE: SIERRA LEONE ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA  
COMMUNITY MULTI-PURPOSE CENTER

Address: 17218 107 Avenue NW T5S 1E9



MEET AND GREET WITH  
HON. PATRICK MICHAELSON GIBRILLA

DEPUTY MINISTER OF YOUTH  
GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE



- The following link presents a video highlight on this Platform Point #3 (Consular Services):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O37kVkan5N-Q&t=138s>

Figure 3-3: Community Town Hall Meeting held in October, 2023 with the Deputy Minister of Youths, Govt. of Sierra Leone

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## 4. Social, Cultural, and Religious Projects

- SLAA typically undertakes various activities to facilitate and promote social interactions, cultural heritage, religious education, and the observance of Christian and Islamic Ceremonies. This is in addition to the traditional celebration of Sierra Leone's Independence Anniversary and other civic engagements. This trait inspired the concept of Platform Point # 4 by the current executive team.

- This Platform Point is, by its very title, a composite venture. It means it comprises various sub-projects and similar initiatives. Some of the activities it covers are seasonal and often recurring. Others, like births, marriages, bereavement, and invitations of SLAA by other organizations, may be undertaken as the need arises.

- Some events would fall in more than one category. For example, a quiz competition for school children could also be classified as an event to promote the involvement of children in community activities.

- The SLAA President said that SLAA Family Members have been calling for the association's increased and proactive involvement in the promotion of traditional events which benefit children more directly.

- Thus, an overview of this Platform Point would highlight (but not limited to) the following:

### 1. Religious – Christian & Islamic: Ramadan, Lent, Eid (Islamic festivals)

Religion, specifically Christianity and Islam, are deeply woven into the social fabric of Sierra Leone. Indeed, most social events start or end with a prayer. In many instances, there is a cleric to grace the occasion and convey Allah/God's blessings upon the gathering and the person/family at the centre of the occasion. The majority of Sierra Leoneans profess faith in God (Christians) or Allah (Muslims) and many are devoted practitioners of either faith. This means, most Sierra Leoneans engage in Christian and/or Islamic practices at some point in their lives.

These religious traits are vividly evident among the membership of SLAA.



Figure 4: SLAA's Community Christmas Party in December 2019

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Since taking office in 2019 and up to date, Dr. Abu Conteh as SLAA Community President would typically make a public statement in the days leading to a religious event like Christmas, Eid-UI Fitri, Eid-UI-Adha, Easter, and the start/end of related seasons like Advent, Lent, and Ramadan.

He would address community members, on behalf of himself, his family, executive team, project officials, and other volunteers, in the spirit of the specific occasion or season.

The messages are invariably recorded in a video and shared on social media like The SLAA WhatsApp Forum, Facebook Page, and YouTube Channel, for ready access.



Figure 4-1-1: Poster for SLAA's Community Christmas Party in 2019



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Figure 4-1-2: 2019 SLAA Community Christmas Celebration

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Figure 4-1-3: Samples of SLAA Community Christmas Gifts - 2020



Figure 4-1-4: Highlights of Celebration and Gifts for distribution to SLAA Community - Christmas, 2022

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Figure 4-1-5: 2023 Christmas Message from Community President, Dr. Abu Conteh



Figure 4-1-6: Presidential Lent Message, 2024



Figure 4-1-7: 2023 Community Christmas Celebration

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Figure 4-1-8: SLAA celebrates Iftar during Ramadan in 2019



Figure 4-1-9: Sample of First Batch of Iftar Distributed per Muslim household in the SLAA Community - 2022



Figure 4-1-10: Sample of Second Batch of Iftar Distributed per Muslim household in the SLAA Community - 2022

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4-1-11: Sample Iftar Distributed to Muslim households in the SLAA Community - 2023



Figure 4-1-13: Ramadan Message 2024 [1445] from Community President, Dr. Abu Conteh



Figure 4-1-12: Eid Celebration - 2022



Figure 4-1-14: Prayer Rugs / Mats acquired for SLAA Muslim Community



Figure 4-1-15: Lailatul Qadr, 2024

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The following links present video highlights on this Platform Point #4 (Social, Cultural & Religious Projects):

## Eid

### Ramadan 2022 [1443] Message

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5v22UK-8KUs&t=19s>

### Eid UI Fitr 2022 [1443] Message

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ2-eW19\\_aE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ2-eW19_aE)

### Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA): Ramadan Message 2023 [1444]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j33CCEkm-jfE&t=1s>

### Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: EID MESSAGE - 2023

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXhXCRyYRg-c&t=5s>

### Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Acquisition of carpets for SLAA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZA4QYQzTrY>

### Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: EID MESSAGE - 2024

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHyBwQVXdBA>

## Christmas

### Christmas 2018 & New Year 2019 Message from Newly-Elected Community President, Dr. Abu Conteh

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEp6\\_sn-IP-M&t=4s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEp6_sn-IP-M&t=4s)

### SLAA Community Christmas Celebrations - 2022

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OoLMRet51\\_E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OoLMRet51_E)

### Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: 2023 Christmas Message from Community President

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ad\\_J3Duryjs&t=5s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ad_J3Duryjs&t=5s)

## Lent

### Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA): Presidential Lent Message 2023 - Dr. Abu Conteh

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1V-p3ouv8YE>

### Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA): Presidential Lent Message 2024 - Dr. Abu Conteh

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0bKyoHy0F4>

## 2. Civic Occasions like Sierra Leone's Independence Anniversary and SLAA Presidential Elections

Every year, SLAA hosts a dinner and dance to mark the anniversary of Sierra Leone's independence.

In the 2019 event, this was complemented by a

flag-raising ceremony at Edmonton City Hall.

The independence event showcases the history, vital statistics, cuisine, music, and cultural ensembles like

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masquerades, to the invitees from the wider community in Edmonton and beyond.

Invitees would typically include civic leaders at the federal, provincial and municipal levels; executives and members of sister national organizations; representatives of business organizations and non-profit

bodies.

In the 2019 event, the then Mayor declared Sierra Leone's Independence Day, 27th April (1961) a special day in Edmonton, Canada.



Figure 4-2-1: SLAA 58th Independence Anniversary – Cutting of Cake – President and wife (Left) and V. P and wife (Right)



Figure 4-2-2: Then Mayor Don Iveson declares 27 April (Sierra Leone's Independence Day) a special day in the City of Edmonton in Canada.



Figure 4-2-5: Don Iveson (then Mayor) with other dignitaries at the Independence Anniversary Dinner in 2019



Figure 4-2-3: Don Iveson and Dr. Abu Conteh pose with the Certificate of Declaration in 2019



Figure 4-2-4: PowerPoint presentation on Sierra Leone during the Independence Anniversary Soiree in 2019

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Figure 4-2-6: A cross-section of SLAA members and guests during the Sierra Leone Independence Anniversary Dinner



Figure 4-2-7: Edmonton's (then) Mayor Don Iveson at the Sierra Leone Independence Anniversary Dinner and Dance in April, 2019



Figure 4-2-8: Dinner is served during the Sierra Leone Independence Anniversary Soiree hosted by SLAA in April 2019



Figure 4-2-9: CAUSE Canada Executive Director, Wendy Fehr at the SLAA Independence Anniversary Soiree in 2019



# Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA)



Sierra Leone Community Multi-Purpose Centre  
17218 - 107 Avenue NW,  
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[sierraleoneedmonton@gmail.com](mailto:sierraleoneedmonton@gmail.com)



Figure 4-2-10: CAUSE Canada's Chief Executive, Wendy Fehr at SLAA's Celebration of Sierra Leone's Independence Anniversary in April 2019



Figure 4-2-11: During the Inauguration of the SLAA executive committee led by Dr. Abu Conteh in January 2019

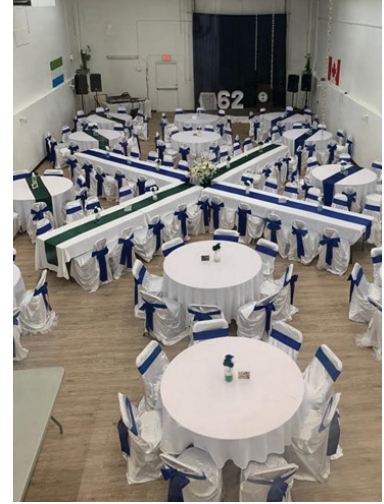


Figure 4-2-12: At the Flag-Raising Ceremony at Edmonton City Hall in 2019



SIERRA LEONE 62ND INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



Figure 4-2-13: Raising the Sierra Leone Flag in Edmonton, AB., to mark our Independence Anniversary in April 2019



SIERRA LEONE 62ND INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

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Figure 4-2-14: SLAA hosts the 62nd Independence Anniversary of Sierra Leone in Edmonton, Canada, in 2023

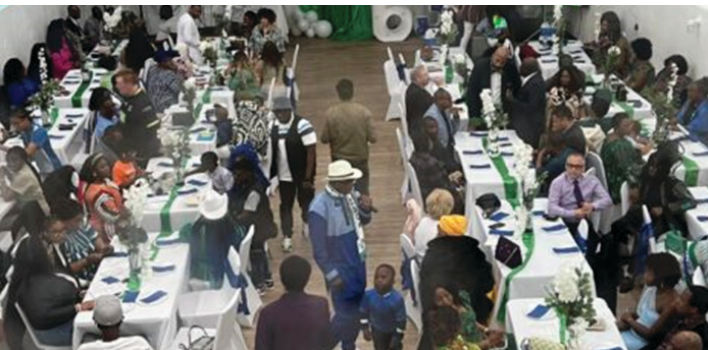


Figure 4-2-15: SLAA hosts the 63rd Independence Anniversary of Sierra Leone in Edmonton, Canada, in 2024

SAVE THIS DATE!!

**THE SIERRA LEONE ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA (SLAA)**

SAT. APRIL 27TH 2024

63RD INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATION OF SIERRA LEONE

Place: 17218 107 Avenue NW Edmonton

Entrance Fee is \$30.00

**DOORS OPEN AT 7PM**

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Figure 4-2-19: Guests are served Dinner during the 63rd Independence Anniversary of Sierra Leone in 2024



Figure 4-2-16: Guests at the Independence Anniversary Dinner and Dance in 2024



Figure 4-2-18: Dinner is Served during the 63rd Independence Anniversary of Sierra Leone in 2024



Figure 4-2-17: SLAA Executives with some Dignitaries during the 63rd Independence Anniversary of Sierra Leone in 2024



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The following links present video highlights on this aspect of Platform Point #4 (Social, Cultural & Religious Projects):

## SLAA Independence Anniversary Celebrations

### Sierra Leone 60th Independence Anniversary Celebration - Muslim Prayer Kutubu Conteh

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sM6q0t-cUCTw&t=5s>

### Sierra Leone 61st Independence Anniversary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUxo9iNC-CP8>

### Dr Abu Conteh, President, SLAA, Alberta, Canada - Sierra Leone 61st Independence Celebrations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKafcAmT4rc>

The following are links to news reports on this aspect of Platform Point #4 (Social, Cultural & Religious Projects):

## SLAA Independence Anniversary Celebrations

### Sierra Leoneans in Edmonton Celebrate Sierra Leone 63rd Independence Anniversary

<https://40acrescanada.com/slaa-independence-diversity-report-2024>

## Edmonton Mayor proclaims April 27 Sierra Leone Independence Day

<https://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/edmonton-mayor-proclaims-april-27-as-sierra-leone-independence-day>

## Sierra Leoneans in Edmonton fly their national flag

<https://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/sierra-leoneans-in-edmonton-fly-their-national-flag>

## CAUSE CANADA executive director at Sierra Leone Independence celebration

<https://thepatrioticvanguard.com/cause-canada-executive-director-at-sierra-leone-independence-celebration>

## COVID-19: Sierra-Canadian pastor hosts worship by telephone

<https://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/covid-19-sierra-canadian-pastor-hosts-worship-by-telephone>

Elections

## Sierra Leone Association Edmonton Inauguration 2014

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7f4Q4qA-gEQ&t=593s>

## Vote Dr Abu Conteh: 14 Points Platform

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CefBDOUzy-Wc>

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**Dr Abu Conteh Community President,  
Sierra Leone Association of Alberta,  
Canada**

**[Explaining Election deferral].**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrMr\\_r8BDuw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrMr_r8BDuw)

**Sierra Leone Association of Alberta:  
Announcement of Community Election**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8DOK9O-0jwc>

**Sierra Leone Association of Alberta:  
Re-election Acceptance Speech by Dr.  
Abu Conteh**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfjqOn24Vrk>

### **3. Personal/Familial Milestones:**

#### **Baby-Naming Ceremonies, Baptisms/Christenings, Marriages, Graduations**

“It takes a village to raise a child.” This adage guides SLAA as it seeks to promote unity and cooperation among members and their families.

In this regard, SLAA supports its members whenever there is celebration of life-events in a family.

From spreading the news of the event and arrangements related to the celebration, to coordinating financial and/or material resources for the benefit of the family, SLAA would do its best to help make things run smoothly for the family.

The association would use its WhatsApp Group platform to share news, greetings and similar sentiments, while offering the celebrants a medium to announce related activities. This is where SLAA would also encourage members to volunteer their time, expertise, and energy, in helping make the celebration a success.

**Edmonton Municipal Elections Address  
By Dr Abu Conteh**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvieCJeu4AY>

**Edmonton: Dr. Abu Conteh is new  
SLAA president**

<https://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/edmonton-dr-abu-conteh-is-new-slaa-president>



*Figure 4-3-1: Highlight of a Baby-Naming Ceremony within the Sierra Leone community*

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## 4. Intra-SLAA Groups

SLAA is in a sense, an umbrella organization comprising smaller groups which may be based on demographics like age, ethnicity, and social units as basic as a social club.

Thus, the association has sub-groups like The SLAA Seniors Group, Sierra Leone Women's Support Group, cultural groups based on ethnicity; entertainment-oriented masquerades, and simple social clubs.

- Seniors Group
- Women's Support Group
- Ethno-Cultural Groups - Ndegbormei, Tawopaneh, Krio Descendants Union, Nnakafala, Mandain, Fullah Progressive Union.
- Social Clubs - Family and Friends, Friends Like Brothers, and Afro Pioneer.
- Cultural Masquerades – Canada Paddle (formerly Arie Edmonton), Gorboi Masquerade by Ndegbormei.
- Podcasts – Medanne Productions and Dimdin Podcast



Figure 4-4-3: Afrigue Edmonton Dance Band performing at the 58th Independence Anniversary Dinner and Dance in 2019



Figure 4-4-1: Gorboi masquerade by Ndegbormei (a sub-group of SLAA) during the Independence Anniversary Dinner in 2019



Figure 4-4-2: Canada Paddle (formerly Arie Edmonton) performs at the 2019 Independence Anniversary Event

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## 5. Fundraising Events in Aid of Causes in Sierra Leone

Interactions among SLAA Members sometimes result in the formation of smaller groups within the Sierra Leone community in this part of Canada.

Some may have direct links to Sierra Leone by supporting initiatives there with funds and materials they generate here in Canada, or they might focus on a cause which benefits SLAA Members here in Canada. In either case, people in Sierra Leone benefit directly or indirectly in the long run. The overall effect is a sense of fulfillment among the group/club members within the SLAA fold. They invariably feel they are helping the community in their respective ways.

Some of these groups are autonomous in their operations and are not sub-groups of SLAA. Yet they too maintain cordial relationships with this association.

The following entities meet these criteria in their respective relationships with SLAA:

1. The African-Canadian Education (ACE) Foundation (founded by former SLAA President, Mr. Augustine Marah)
2. Afro Pioneer
3. We Yone Community Development Organization

## 6. Picnics and Other Events to promote cohesion within the community

Winters are perennially cold here in Alberta, Canada. Also, the snowy/icy conditions linger for many months. This climate limits the chances for outdoor recreation or entertainment at the personal, familial, or community level.

Thus, our association encourages community members to engage in light or moderate physical exercise as a routine. Furthermore, SLAA facilitates group activities which involve physical exercise among members.

One of our strategies is to blend physical exercise with social/cultural interactions among members. So, in the summer the association hosts or supports outdoor activities at every opportunity.

In this regard, SLAA hosts a picnic every summer. At this event, there are games, children's play areas, and friendly contests within SLAA and between SLAA and

other similar organizations. Popular events include tug-of-war, egg-and-spoon, sprints, relays, soccer, and musical chairs.

Competitions are designed to include diverse demographics like seniors, children, women, and men. The rules are relaxed so that the effects are light physical exercise and the casual practice of teamwork by contestants in a safe and welcoming atmosphere. SLAA invites other similar organizations and encourages members to bring their friends along.

To enhance social interaction among all attendees, food and beverages are served for free. Then there is dance music to cap it all. SLAA provides these features to foster a celebratory mood while reinforcing cultural and traditional values like friendship, physical exercise, and healthy competition among peers.

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Figure 4-6-1: Men's Race during the 2019 SLAA Annual Community Picnic in Edmonton, AB.



Figure 4-6-2: A friendly soccer match between SLAA children during the 2019 SLAA Annual Community Picnic in Edmonton, AB



Figure 4-6-3: Egg-and-Spoon Race during SLAA's Annual Picnic in 2019



Figure 4 6-4: Bouncing Castle for children's entertainment at the 2019 SLAA Annual Community Picnic in Edmonton, AB



Figure 4-6-5: 2023 SLAA Annual Community Picnic - Winners of 5000m Event





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Figure 4-6-7: Tug-of-War – Children – Boys vs Girls at the 2023 SLAA Annual Community Picnic in Edmonton, AB



SLAA Annual Picnic (2023)

Figure 4-6-6: 2023 SLAA Annual Community Picnic - Winner, Women Walking Race



Figure 4-6-9: Eating Race – Women at the 2023 SLAA Annual Community Picnic in Edmonton, AB



Figure 4-6-8: Eating Race – Men at the 2023 SLAA Annual Community Picnic in Edmonton, AB



Figure 4-6-10: 2023 SLAA Annual Community Picnic

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## SLAA Brings Nostalgia with 'Oldies De Goodies' Night in Edmonton



By Daniel Oldfield,  
Edmonton, Canada.  
November 14, 2022.

The Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA) brought the crowd again last Saturday November 12, 2022 with the most awaited party of the year. The event simply titled "Oldies De Goodies" was held at the newly acquired SLAA multi purpose community centre, 17218-107 Avenue, Edmonton, Canada.

The Chief Organizer Mrs. Fetula Munde and two others in her committee, Assistant Social Secretary Mariama Turay and Esther Shyllon were some of the master minds behind the success of the event.

The dress code of the night was all in oldies attires with guests dressed up in some fancy 60s/70s/80s/early 80s styles.

The night was all fun with lots of foods and dancing and a cash bar.

Kudos to the president of the association, Dr. Abu Conteh, for bringing the people together and making this community a vibrant one across Canada. It will be worthwhile to note that in just under two years, Dr. Conteh has acquired a lot for the community including a 15-seater transportation vehicle and a community hall for the sole use of Sierra Leoneans in Alberta.

DJ Ivansovics and crew were playing the oldies songs all night long.



Figure 4-6-11: Oldies D Goodies Night – 2022

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Figure 4-6-12: Oldies D Goodies Night – 2023

Here are weblinks to this aspect of Platform Point #4  
(Social, Cultural & Religious Projects):  
Community Picnic

## Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Annual Community Picnic - 2022

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CijzVpV-Goek&t=4s>

## Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Annual Community Picnic - 2023

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSmxGD4X-hxs>

## News Reports on Picnic hosted by SLAA

## Alberta lawmaker braves rain at SLAA picnic

<http://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/alberta-lawmaker-braves-rain-at-slaa-picnic>

## Oldies Night

## Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Announcement - Oldies The Goodies Night

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mGE2iPkeMZk>

## Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Announcement of The 2022 EIRC Com- munity Impact Grant

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Qqub-Caap\\_Y&t=101s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Qqub-Caap_Y&t=101s)

## Announcement: Committee for Ad- dressing Recent Vices in SLAA

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_IQ5Qm-jzs5w&t=8s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IQ5Qm-jzs5w&t=8s)

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## 7. Facilitating the Involvement of Disabled Persons in SLAA / Civic Affairs

SLAA encourages the participation of members in civic affairs. One way the association does this is by welcoming members to take an active part in the running of the association itself.

It is in this same spirit that SLAA promotes inclusion of disabled persons in the running of the association, as executive officers, volunteers, or as ordinary members attending events.

In its first year in office, the current executive committee facilitated the nomination – and subsequent election - of one member who is also an amputee, as whip of the association.

(See news report below)

Edmonton: SLAA Whip is champion for persons with disabilities

<https://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/edmonton-slaa-whip-is-champion-for-persons-with-disabilities>

## 8. Participation in Canadian Festivals and Programmes



Figure 4-8-1: Sierra Leone at the 2019 Edmonton Heritage Festival; thanks to SLAA-EMCN (Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers) cooperation

SLAA strives to facilitate the integration of members into the mainstream Canadian society. One way is to take part in activities and programs which involve the interaction of the various national cultures which constitute Canada's diversity. The Edmonton Heritage Festival is an annual event which brings different national cultures together in harmony.

SLAA was well represented in the 2019 Edmonton Heritage Festival. The association took a stand in the Newcomer's Pavilion operated by the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers.

Two Sierra Leoneans stood out among the many SLAA volunteers at this event. Clothier Mrs. Cecilia Hopanda Momoh and Artist Gibril Bangura did Sierra Leone proud with their respective displays of cultural clothing and paintings at the festival. Another Sierra Leonean, Engineer Joseph Hassan, played a pivotal role in the showcasing of Sierra Leonean flavour of African music and dance.

A major highlight of SLAA's participation in the three-day event was the visit by one Provincial Minister to the Sierra Leone stand. She even bought one of the paintings put on display by Artist Gibril Bangura.



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Figure 4-8-2: Artist Gibril Bangura (left) with guests at SLAA's Pavilion during Edmonton Heritage Festival in 2019

The following are links to news reports on this aspect of Platform Point #4:

## Edmonton Heritage Festival: Culture Minister buys Sierra Leonean Painting

<https://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/edmonton-heritage-festival-alberta-s-culture-minister-buys-sierra-leonean-painting>

## SLAA attends Black History soiree in Fort McMurray

<https://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/slaa-attends-black-history-soiree-in-fort-mcmurray>

## 9. Conflict Resolution within the Sierra Leone Community

SLAA has a Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee to help members settle their differences in an amicable manner and with mutual respect.

## 10. Bereavement

Deaths are an unwelcome fact of life. To this end, our executive team supports bereaved individuals and families as best as possible. Some of the ways the SLAA supports grieving members and their families are the use of the community's social media platforms and the collection of financial contributions.

Specifically, SLAA facilitates the dissemination of key details about the loss of a loved one, their obituary, and tentative/confirmed funeral arrangements, on the SLAA WhatsApp forum.

While the executive makes itself available to anchor such mass communication, members of the bereaved family are able to take the lead if they prefer to do so.

Also, SLAA coordinates the collection of donations made by sympathizers (within and outside the association) to the bereaved family of a registered member. In times of bereavement, it is up to the affected family to decide to what extent SLAA would be involved.

SLAA has a funeral policy to help the bereaved family when a registered member passes away. The policy came into effect in 2019 with the approval of the general membership.

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*Figure 4-10-1: SLAA Vice President, Ivan Jackson signs the Book of Condolence at the funeral of an SLAA Member's spouse in 2019*



*Figure 4-10-2: Vigil for the Late Pa Arnold Ayodele George*

Here is a link to a video on this aspect of Platform Point #4 (Social, Cultural & Religious Projects):

## **Prayer Ceremony [Quranic Recitation and Fidau] For The Late Haja Isata Koroma**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2JVsDquO7U&t=1s>

Here are links to news reports on bereavement within the Sierra Leone community  
Edmonton:

### **Mother of newborn twins laid to rest**

<https://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/edmonton-mother-of-newborn-twins-laid-to-rest>

**Canada: Cameroonians, Sierra Leoneans mourn Walters Munde** <https://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/cameroonians-sierra-leoneans-mourn-walters-munde>

### **Edmonton: Pa Arnold George laid to rest**

<https://thepatrioticvanguard.com/edmonton-pa-arnold-george-laid-to-rest>

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## 5. Immigration and Skilled Workers' Project

- This project is meant to help SLAA members facilitate the migration of their loved ones to Canada, especially those who have skills that are in high demand in the job market in Alberta and other parts of this country.
- The aim of this project is to guide potential immigrants on appropriate programmes such as the Skilled Worker Program, Sponsorship Holder Agreement, Group of Five, Super Visa for Parents and Grandparents, Family Class Reunion, and Study Permit.
- SLAA does this by providing prospective applicants with useful tips and firsthand background information about industries, sectors, and current workforce demographics.
- SLAA is working to revive the Sponsorship Holder Agreement.



Figure 5-1: A slide from an SLAA presentation prepared for this Platform Point project



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## 6. Networking with Sierra Leoneans in other provinces

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- The rationale of this project is to help Sierra Leone community organizations optimize desired outcomes by cooperating with each other in tackling challenges which compatriots may face no matter where they live in Canada.

- One example was how the collaboration of various Sierra Leone community organizations attracted attention and support from the Canadian Parliament during the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone and other West African countries around 2014. Before this concerted effort, no single organization was able to attract such attention and support.

- Networking with counterpart associations in other provinces of Canada will serve SLAA Members well. For one thing, cooperation and collaboration of

Sierra Leonean community organizations will facilitate travel; whether for work, education, tourism, or internal migration.

- To address this platform point, SLAA is part of a social media (WhatsApp) forum comprising leaders of various Sierra Leone community organizations in some of the provinces in Canada. Through this platform, the leaders effectively collaborate, share resources, and help one another in their respective communities.

- In addition, we collaborate via email, telephone, and video conference and attend programmes/events organized by sister Sierra Leonean community organizations.

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## 7. Linking New Sierra Leoneans to available resources

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- SLAA has an official website ([www.sierraleonealberta.ca](http://www.sierraleonealberta.ca)), a Facebook page (SLAA: Sierra Leone Association of Alberta), and a WhatsApp platform where members of the association interact and receive updates on current developments within the community, and in other parts of Canada.

- The executive committee also disseminates public notices and advisories from the various levels of government (municipal, provincial, and federal) and other agencies and organizations.

- The Executive Team supplements official publications with video translations of the messages, in Sierra Leone's lingua franca which is Krio.

- The association not only conveys public

notices and referrals (formal/informal), but also explains their details on its social media platform. Members are assured that they can call upon executive members and volunteers for any assistance they may need in accessing resources which are available as advertised.

- The Coronavirus pandemic and its attendant restrictions was a big test in assessing the unity and social cohesion among members of the Sierra Leone community in our part of Canada. SLAA was in the middle of this trying time as the executive committee sought to promote connections and interactions among members even when social distancing, isolation, and quarantining were the predominant trends.

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- To help members cope during these challenging times, SLAA sought to provide food hampers, gift cards, and personal items like hand sanitizers.
- Our executive team set up The SLAA Business Club, through which the association supports entrepreneurs in our community with capacity building in areas like business registration, basic book-keeping, and tax filing.
- SLAA, through this Business Club, encourages entrepreneurs to help community youths by giving them basic skills training in the form of internship and recruitment as apprentices.
- The association also supports our entrepreneurs by providing them with grant money and facilitating networking.



Figure 7-1: Food Hampers distributed to 300 Households



Figure 7-2: Shockproofing Recovery Grant – \$200 Gift Cards per household for 300 Households



Figure 7-3: Shockproofing Renewal Grant – \$150 Gift Cards per household for 300 Households

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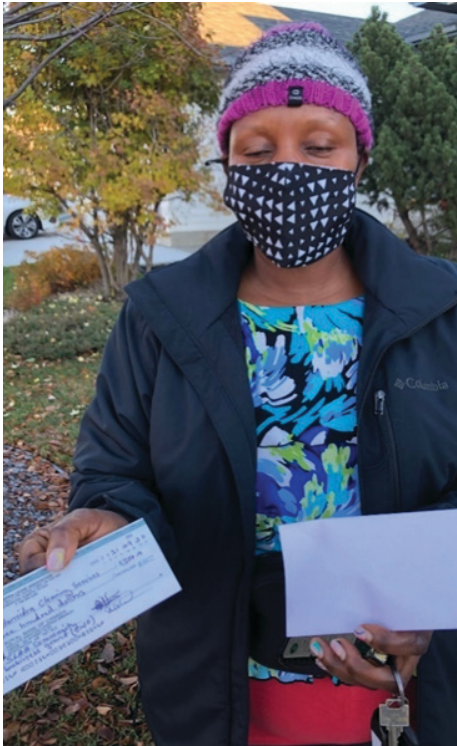


Figure 7-4: One of the community entrepreneurs who received grant money to support their businesses



Figure 7-5 Samples of materials for business operations purchased with grant money provided to community entrepreneurs



Figure 7-6: Capacity Building Workshop for Executives and Heads of Community Sub-groups and Committees

## YOUTH WELLNESS & PARENTAL CAPACITY BUILDING SEMINAR

This session is to help parents/caregivers understand the prevalence of organized crime and gang activities holistically.

Parents/Caregivers will gain a fundamental understanding of the gang-associated behaviour, identifiers to watch for with their youth and to help youth make constructive and positive decisions under negative influences and social pressures.

This free session is designed for parents and caregivers of youth.

Register on eventbrite:

To learn more, visit [edmonton.ca/buildingsafercommunities](http://edmonton.ca/buildingsafercommunities)

DATE

## MAY 6 2024

TIME

## 6-8 PM

LOCATION

SIERRA LEONE ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA  
COMMUNITY MULTI-PURPOSE CENTRE  
17218 107 AVE NW, EDMONTON T5S 1E9

Figure 7-7: Building Safer Communities Fund Grant – Prevention and Intervention Measures

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- During his two terms in office, Dr. Abu Conteh raised more than One Million Dollars (\$1,025,672.56) in grants money for the association, from governments, non-profit organizations, and individuals. A breakdown follows:

Source	Purpose	Amount
<b>Government</b>		
<b>Municipal: City of Edmonton</b>		
2021 CIOG AWARD	Operating Grant	\$2,218
2022 CIOG AWARD	Operating Grant	\$16,500
2022 EIRC - Community Impact Grant	Oldies D Goodies Event	\$5,000
2022 EIRC Space Subsidy	Space Rental	\$5,000
2023 Building Safer Communities Fund Grant	Gun and Gang Violence – Prevention and Intervention Measures	\$129,030
<b>Provincial: Government of Alberta</b>		
Community Initiatives Program – Project-Based	SLAA Vehicle Purchase – 50% Funding	\$13,624
Ethnocultural Grant 2024	Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Facilitating Ethnocultural Nexus in Alberta	\$40,000
<b>Federal: Government of Canada</b>		
COVID-19 Emergency Response Support for Non-Profits – through Canadian Red Cross.	Supporting the Sierra Leonean Diaspora During COVID-19	\$99,626
COVID-19 Emergency Support for Community Organizations Granting Program	COVID-19 Emergency Response Support for Community Organizations	\$102,878.56
New Horizon for Seniors Programme – 2019 - 2020	Promoting the wellbeing of Seniors in the Sierra Leone Community	\$25,000
New Horizon for Seniors Programme – 2020 - 2021	Promoting the wellbeing of Seniors in the Sierra Leone Community	\$25,000
New Horizon for Seniors Programme – 2021 - 2022	Promoting the wellbeing of Seniors in the Sierra Leone Community	\$25,000

# Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA)



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New Horizon for Seniors Programme – 2022 - 2023	Promoting the wellbeing of Seniors in the Sierra Leone Community	\$25,000
New Horizon for Seniors Programme – 2023 - 2024	Promoting the wellbeing of Seniors in the Sierra Leone Community	\$20,000
New Horizon for Seniors Programme – 2024 - 2025	Promoting the wellbeing of Seniors in the Sierra Leone Community	\$25,000
Safer and Stronger Grant – through CWF	Community Support	\$108,300
Shockproofing Renewal Grant – through CWF	Community Support	\$50,000
Shockproofing Recovery Grant through CWF	Community Support	\$100,000
Shockproofing Capacity Building Grant through CWF	Community Support	\$20,000
SBCCI – Retrofitting Grant	Hall Acquisition: The Sierra Leone Association of Alberta	\$90,419
SBCCI through The Council for Advancement of African Canadians in Alberta	Enhance Operational Management Effectiveness and Efficiency: The Sierra Leone Association of Alberta – Marketing & Publicity	\$31,182
SBCCI through The Council for Advancement of African Canadians in Alberta	Enhance operational management & efficiency in The Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Capacity Building	\$40,000
SBCCI through The Council for Advancement of African Canadians in Alberta	Comprehensive Cybersecurity Implementation	\$20,000
<b>Non-Governmental Organizations</b>		
Sinkunia Community Development Organization	Partial funding for our 2019 SLAA Community Census	\$3,100
Edmonton Multicultural Coalition	Website Initiative	\$1,000
Action for Healthy Communities – Seed Grant	2023 Brain of SLAA Contest	\$2,000
Edmonton Multicultural Coalition	Participation in Alberta Culture Day Celebration - 2022	\$545

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<b>Individuals</b>		
Debra & Earl Hagman	Donation to Christmas Celebration - 2021	\$250
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,025,672.56</b>

## 8. Networking with various levels of government (municipal, provincial, federal)

- SLAA takes pride in helping its members to know their rights, duties, and responsibilities wherever they may find themselves – at home, in school, at work, and out in the public.
- To perform this role effectively, Dr. Conteh and his team of executives and volunteers keep abreast with the laws, bylaws, and advisories from the three levels of government.
- Also, the association sends representatives to attend informational and/or networking events and programs which may involve any of these levels of government, directly or indirectly.
- Such networking also affords SLAA opportunities to promote the interests of its membership.



Figure 8-1: SLAA President Dr. Abu Conteh (centre) with some members of his executive team at a meeting with a City of Edmonton official in September 2019

The following is a link to a news report on this Platform Point # 8 (Networking with various levels of government):

### Canadian minister joins black community leaders in online meeting

<https://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/canadian-minister-joins-black-community-leaders-in-online-meeting>

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## 9. Values Project

- This SLAA initiative focuses on instilling and promoting respect and compassion. It was conceived to reinforce the community spirit which the association represents.
- In its broadest scope, we want to promote and reinforce positive cultural and civic values in our members as they go about their lives.
- The Values Project espouses respect for oneself, for others, and for societal values and institutions. Hard work, compassion, empathy, honesty, fair play, and diligence are among the many virtues we encourage in our members, through the ways we interact with each other.
- SLAA ensures that community-wide panel

discussions are up and running; geared towards two targets:

- 1) To demonstrate best practices when it comes to communication. That way, we build skills in communicating with others even on topical issues, agreeing to disagree.
  - 2) By such discussions we are probably able to develop plausible solutions to burning issues. Such achievements may not only be beneficial to our community but may have a spillover effect on our country, Sierra Leone.
- We have mentor-mentee relationships; hence getting our community members to serve as role models for youngsters.

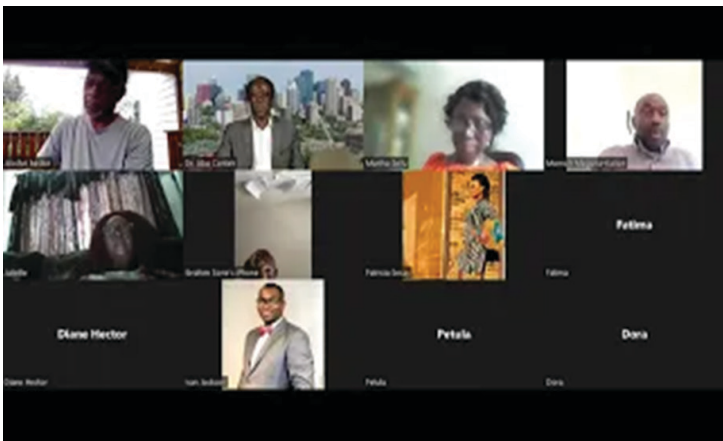


Figure 9-1: Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: First Community Panel Discussion on Topical Issues - June 19, 2022

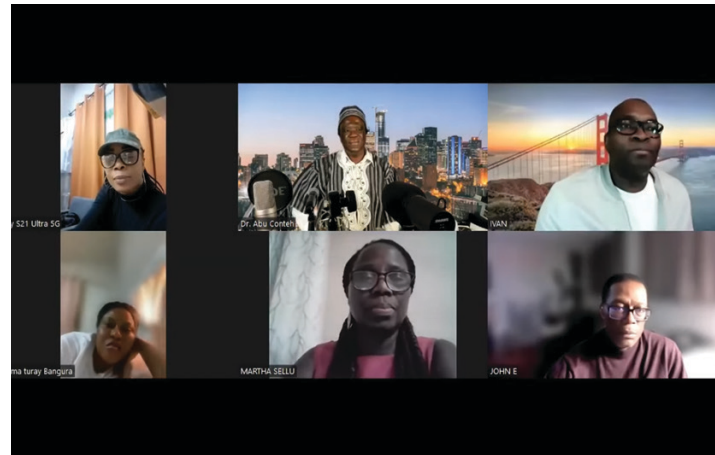


Figure 9-2: Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Second Community Panel Discussion on Topical Issues

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## SLAA COMMUNITY PANEL Discussion on Topical Issues

The Third Community Panel Discussion on Topical Issues is scheduled as follows:

DATE: SUNDAY

February 11, 2024

Time: 4: pm

TOPIC: Community Challenges and the way forward

ORGANIZED BY  
Dr. Abu Conteh of

MEDIUM: BY ZOOM

Zoom ID: 820-6437-4778  
Password: 902247

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82064374778?pwd=Wmk0S3pmQ3JjamtNb0JKdjdjN3MzZz09>

Figure 9-3: Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Third Community Panel Discussion on Topical Issues

The following are links to some of our initiatives to support this platform point:

### Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: First Community Panel Discussion

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ag-mGvNK2-ig>

### Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Second Community Panel Discussion on Topical Issues

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DI-4awHznBpk>

### Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Third Community Panel Discussion on Topical Issues

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tZi0azCbz-JQ>

## 10. Awards

• SLAA's Awards Project is intended to create a reward system which complements societal rewards. For example, awards are given for excellence in schoolwork to complement a certificate, diploma, or university degree, already earned by a member of our association.

• We focus on members who have rendered tremendous services to the community.

• SLAA organized a Presidential Awards Ceremony to recognize and appreciate our various volunteers. By this, we intend to achieve two goals:

> Give satisfaction to the volunteers that their efforts are recognized and do not go unnoticed.

> Motivate other community members to volunteer in community services.

• SLAA also attracts awards and other forms of recognition from partners. For example, Edmonton Multi-Cultural Coalition, Afro-Canadian Awards, City of Edmonton, Government of Alberta, and Government of Canada.



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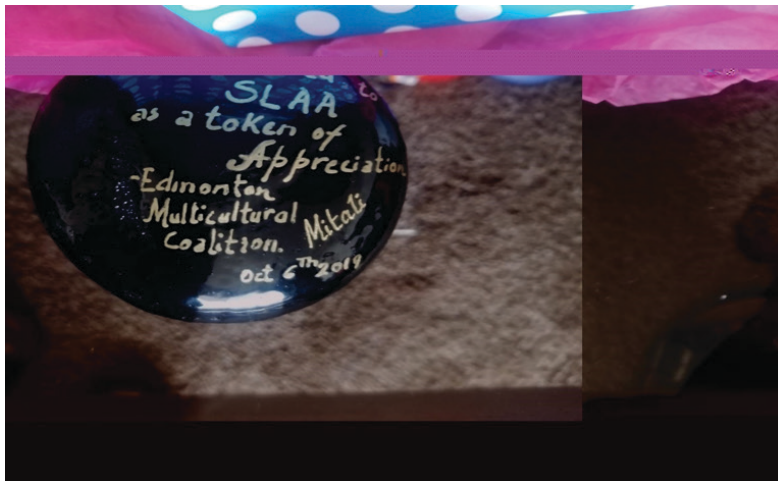
Telephone: 780 604 5260

<https://sierraleonealberta.ca/>

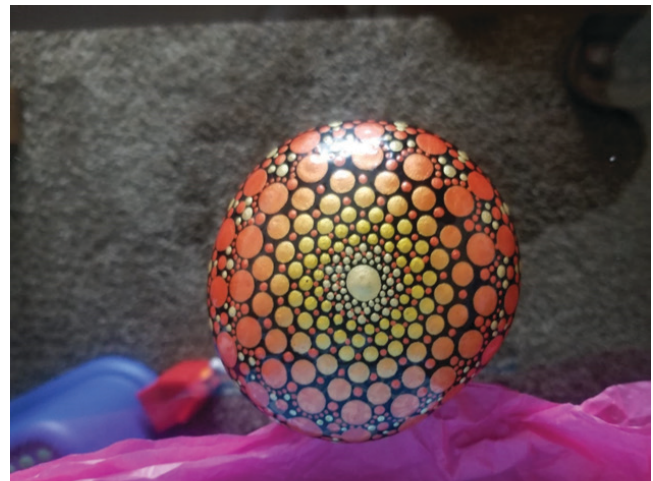
[sierraleoneedmonton@gmail.com](mailto:sierraleoneedmonton@gmail.com)



*Certificate of Appreciation*



*Token of Appreciation (Front)*



*Token of Appreciation (Back)*

*Figure 10-1: Certificate and Token of Appreciation from Edmonton Multicultural Coalition.*

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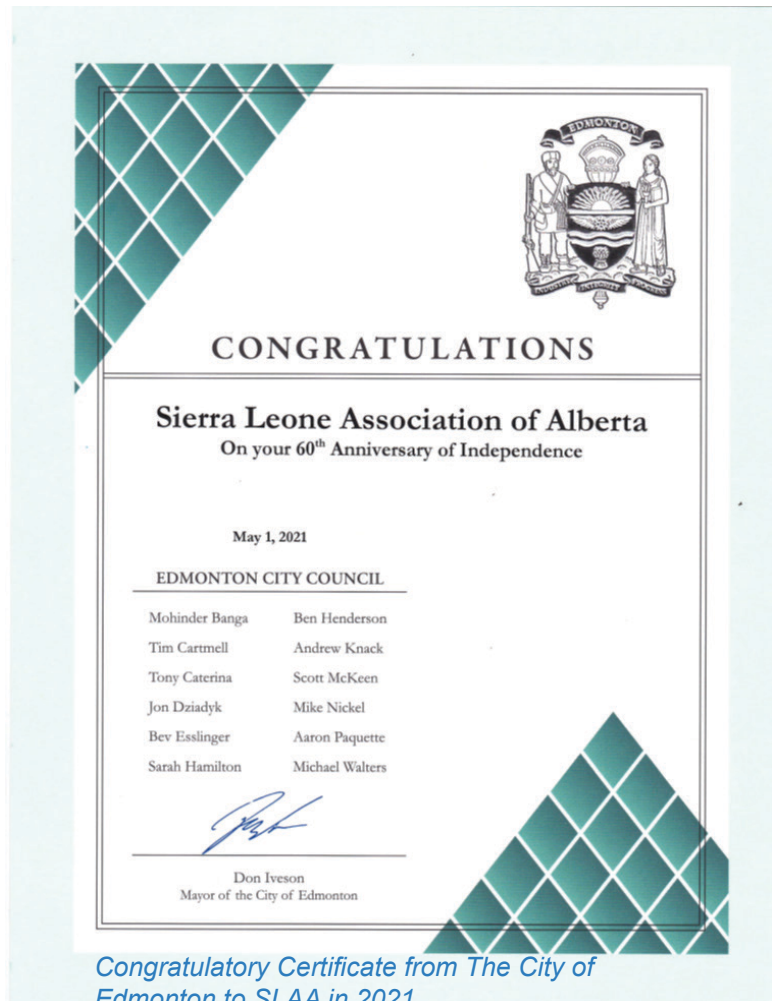
Figure 10-2: Certificate of Recognition - Edmonton Leone Stars



Figure 10-3: SLAA President, Dr. Abu Conteh (centre) with an AC - Afro Canadian Award won by this association in 2019



Mayor Don Iveson presenting Certificate of Recognition to SLAA Community President, Dr. Abu Conteh in April 2019



Congratulatory Certificate from The City of Edmonton to SLAA in 2021

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Certificate of Recognition from The City of Edmonton to SLAA in 2022

Figure 10-4: Certificates of Recognition from The City of Edmonton

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*Figure 10-5: Certificate of Recognition from Government of Alberta to SLAA*

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*Ottawa*

Room 1130, The Valour Building  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6  
Tel.: 613-992-3594  
Fax: 613-992-3616



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

*Constitution*

596 Riverbend Square, Suite 204  
Edmonton, Alberta T6R 2K5  
Tel: 780-495-4351  
Fax: 780-495-4489

*Matt Jeneroux*

Member of Parliament  
Edmonton Riverbend

EDMONTON  
March 2, 2021

Dr. Abu Conteh  
Sierra Leone Association of Alberta  
#310, 11512-40 Avenue NW  
Edmonton, AB T6J 0R6

Dear Dr. Conteh and team,

I would like to extend my warmest congratulations on receiving the New Horizons for Seniors Grant. I'm just thrilled to hear of your success and so happy that you took the time to apply here in our community.

Starting March 3, 2021, a Service Canada representative will be contacting you to finalize your funding agreement, but in the meantime, I wanted to be the first to reach out and say congratulations for a wonderful project.

As your Member of Parliament, I sincerely appreciate your leadership and commitment to our community. I wish you and your organization all the best in your future endeavors and look forward to hearing about many more of the successes from your program.

Congratulations, again!

Yours Sincerely,

Matt Jeneroux  
Member of Parliament for Edmonton Riverbend

[Matt.jeneroux@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Matt.jeneroux@parl.gc.ca)  
<http://mattjeneroux.ca/>

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Figure 10-6: Congratulatory Messages from the Government of Canada to SLAA

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Figure 10-7: Don Iveson, Mayor of The City of Edmonton, receives a Plaque of Appreciation from Mrs. Eudora Conteh (wife of SLAA President, Dr. Abu Conteh) in 2019, presented on behalf of the association



Figure 10-8: Mrs. Juliette Jackson (Wife of SLAA Vice President, Mr. Ivan Jackson), presented a Plaque and Certificate of Appreciation to MLA David Shepherd in 2019 on behalf of the association



Figure 10-9: Mrs. Rebecca Grey presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Hon. Kaycee Madu in 2019 on behalf of the association



Figure 10-10: Dr. Mitali Banerjee, Keynote Speaker for our 61st Independence Anniversary Celebration, receives a Certificate of Appreciation from Madam Martha Caulker-Mbayo in 2019 on behalf of the association

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Figure 10-11: 2024 SLAA Presidential Awards - Sample Trophy

## 11. Newsletter & Website

- SLAA has an official website, [www.sierraleonealberta.ca](http://www.sierraleonealberta.ca). It was developed with funds provided by the Government of Canada; through SBCCI, administered by Africa Centre.
- A previous initiative to develop a website ([www.slaa.ca](http://www.slaa.ca)) was funded by Edmonton Multi-cultural Coalition, with which SLAA enjoys mutually beneficial collaboration. This did not work out because the contractor failed to deliver.
- SLAA now produces a Newsletter from the same SBCCI funding.
- Both components of this Platform Point are being run by the SLAA Media Committee.
- The SBCCI funds enabled SLAA to set up and maintain the website.
- Similarly, SLAA used said funds to buy a desktop computer, a printer, and other materials, for the publication of the newsletter.



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The screenshot shows the website's header with a navigation menu: Home, About Us, Projects, Events & Activities, News & articles, Contact, and a green 'Donate Now' button. Below the menu is the tagline: 'Bringing together Sierra Leoneans and Sierra Leonean-Canadians living in Edmonton and nearby areas in Alberta, Canada.' The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column, titled 'Events & Activities', lists two events: '63rd Independence Celebration of Sierra Leone' on April 27 at 7:00 pm at 17218 107 Ave NW Edmonton, Alberta, and 'Annual Meeting' on December 21, 2023 at 8:00 am at the same address. Both events include a 'JOIN EVENT' button. The right column, titled 'Social Feed', displays a Facebook post from the Sierra Leone Association of Alberta Canada, dated Wednesday, featuring a poster for the '2024 PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS' which includes a trophy image and event details.

Figure 11-1: Screenshot of the website of The Sierra Leone Association of Alberta, Canada

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT!

The Commissioning of The SLAA Newsletter opens yet another window for a peep into the activities of The Sierra Leone Community here in Alberta, Canada.

Our current executive, The Dr. Abu Conteh-led Executive Committee, came into office on a 14-Point Platform in January 2019. Since then, we have made good on the promises embedded in these platform points, among which is the production of a community newsletter. The commissioning of this maiden edition puts a check mark against this platform point, hence validating its achievement.

We expect that this community newsletter will provide a snapshot and a panoramic view of the various endeavours within our community. It will serve as a blue-print, complementing our community website, compendium, project documents, Facebook, and WhatsApp, in the promulgation of our various events and programs.

Conceived and designed as a periodic publication, I sincerely hope that subsequent Executive Committees will continue and sustain this initiative of producing our community newsletter. This will help keep community members and stakeholders alike, updated with community news and providing our community entrepreneurs the much-needed opportunity for publicity.

On behalf of my executive team and the entire membership of SLAA, I would like to thank The Government of Canada for funding this initiative through its Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative (SBCCI) Fund.

Dr. Abu Conteh .  
Community President



**Clothing, Jewelry & Accessories**

✉ [shop@hopandaspassion.com](mailto:shop@hopandaspassion.com)

🌐 [www.hopandaspassion.com](http://www.hopandaspassion.com)

📘 HopandasPassion

📷 HopandasPassion

🎧 HopandasPassion

PAGE 01

Figure 11-2: Screenshot of Maiden Edition of SLAA Community Newsletter - July 1, 2024

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## 12. Education Foundation

The focus of this Platform Point is to support programmes that address the following needs:

- Initiatives to support parent and community involvement and participation in the education of our members.
- Citizenship and leadership development for youths through our Sierra Leone Edmonton Mentorship Program (SLEMP). We believe that developing community leaders is a key part of creating an equitable and inclusive community.
- Enhanced learning opportunities for students, particularly in the arts, health and fitness activities, and environmental programmes. This is done through our After-School Programme. Certified teachers also offer homework help in various subject areas to students at pre-tertiary educational levels.
- Recognition of excellence in learning for all categories of students.
- SLAA also facilitates adult learning through its computer literacy programme for seniors in the community.



*Figure 12-1: SLAA Mentorship Program – The first of two sets of computers (totalling 40) purchased for Students*

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Figure 12-2: SLAA Mentorship Program – The second of two sets of computers (totalling 40) purchased for Students



Figure 12-3: SLAA Mentorship Program – Distribution of Computers to Students



Figure 12-4: SLAA Mentorship Program – Program Co-ordinator, Mr. Prince Thorpe being interviewed by Diversity Magazine



**BRAIN OF SLAA**  
2023

**ELEMENTARY | JUNIOR HIGH | HIGH SCHOOL**

**MATH**  
**SCIENCE**  
**LANGUAGE**

**AUG. 28. 2023**  
**3PM**

**SOCIAL SCIENCE:** SIERRA LEONE COMMUNITY  
CURRENT EVENT AND SIERRA LEONE CUSTOM AND CULTURE  
MULTI-PURPOSE CENTRE  
17218 107 AVE EDMONTON NW  
AB T5S 1E9

**STUDY AND WIN GREAT PRIZES**

ZOOM LINK WILL BE PROVIDED FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO JOIN VIRTUALLY

# Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA)



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[sierraleoneedmonton@gmail.com](mailto:sierraleoneedmonton@gmail.com)



Figure 12-5: SLAA Mentorship Program – Teaching Accessories



Contestants and certificate distributor – Elementary School



Winner - Junior High School - Osman Kamara



Winner - High School - Kutubu Conteh



Contestants and certificate distributor – High School – [L – R] Memuna Kabia and Kutubu Conteh  
Figure 12-6: The Brains of SLAA 2023



2023 Brain of SLAA Contest - Participants and organizers



Contestants and certificate distributor – Junior High School

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## 13. Support for Seniors

SLAA believes that caring for our seniors is a traditional responsibility of the family and community in a typical African home setting. Customarily, we prefer not to send our seniors to assisted living/long-term care facilities.

To this end, SLAA has a Coordinating Team for Seniors that works with community volunteers in rendering the following services:

- Help seniors or their family members identify, access, and use available support services.

- Deliver packages that contain culturally-appropriate grocery and hygiene/sanitary items.
- Help in household tasks such as heavy cleaning and yard work like routine lawn-mowing and snow removal.
- Community-based programmes offering social, recreational and health-related services in group settings.

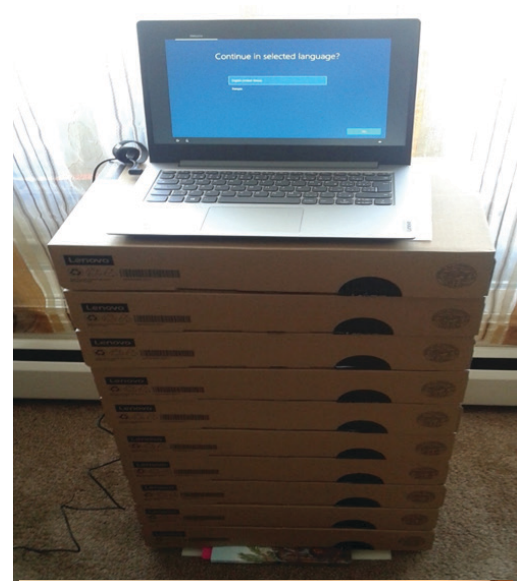
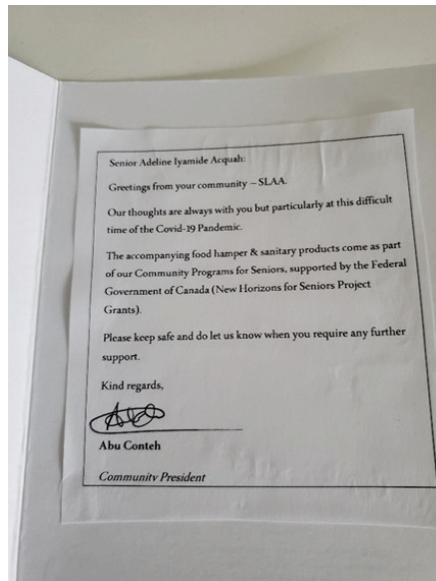


Figure 13-2: Samples of 80 Computers purchased for the SLAA Computer Literacy Programme

Figure 13-1: Cover of Greeting Card presented to SLAA seniors during food hamper delivery in 2020



Figure 13-3: A Community Senior receiving her computer

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Figure 13-4: Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Update on Seniors Programme



Figure 13-5: Distribution of Food Hampers and Sanitary items to SLAA Seniors



Figure 13-6: Gifts for SLAA Seniors during Grandparents Day Celebration, 2022



Figure 13-7: Sample Goodies - Grandparent Day Celebration, 2023

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SLAA Annual Picnic (2023)



SLAA Annual Picnic (2023)

Figure 13-8: 2023 Annual Community Picnic - Winners of Seniors Sprinting Race



SLAA Annual Picnic (2023)

Figure 13-9: Winners of Seniors Sprinting Race - SLAA Picnic, 2023



Figure 13-10: Lapel Badge produced for SLAA Seniors





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SIERRA LEONE ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA

17218 107 Ave, NW,  
AB T5S 1E9

**AGING WELL: SENIORS  
HEALTH AND WELLNESS  
FAIR**

Learn about healthy eating habits

SATURDAY  
MAY 11th 2024  
11am-3pm

Participate in fitness activities by a physiotherapist

**Free Massage**

Meet the following:  
Dentist  
Dietician  
Lawyer  
Ret. Nurse  
Occupational Therapist  
Social Worker

**FREE HEALTHY SNACKS  
AND CARE PACKAGES**



*Matthew Adegbuyi, making a presentation on Healthier eating habits, and lifestyle changes*



*Presentation on Preparation of Wills, Power of Attorney, and other Legal Issues by Mr. Stephen C. Snyder of Snyder & Associates LLP*



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*Physiotherapy Session  
Figure 13-11: Seniors Health and  
Wellness Fair, May 11, 2024*



*Figure 13-12: Mother's Day Dinner  
for Seniors in SLAA – 2024*



*Figure 13-13: Cap produced as gifts  
for seniors during Father's Day,  
2024*



*Figure 13 14: Father's Day Celebration for Seniors in SLAA – 2024*

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Figure 13-15: SLAA's Indoor Table Tennis Table

Here is a link to a video on SLAA's support for seniors

## Sierra Leone Association of Alberta: Update on Seniors Programme

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MwCDckmoS44>

The following is a link to a news report on this support for seniors in our community

## SLAA seniors benefit from \$25,000 federal grant

<http://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/slaa-seniors-benefit-from-25-000-federal-grant>

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## 14. Vehicle Acquisition

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- Transportation is a key component in the effective delivery of services to our members and facilitating their participation in community activities.

- Until 2022, our association faced constraints in this regard because SLAA, as an entity, did not have its own means of transportation. Vehicle owners/drivers within the association used to help the community meet its transportation needs as best as they could, but these individual courtesies were clearly not enough for the optimal operations of SLAA.

- The kind gestures of motorists within our community were – and are still appreciated – by the wider SLAA membership. Yet, the trend only underscored a dire need for SLAA to acquire its own vehicle, preferably a multi-seater van with ample cargo space.

- The need for an SLAA vehicle was most pronounced when the association needed to mobilize elderly members (seniors), families with young children, volunteers, and people with mobility challenges.

# Sierra Leone Association of Alberta (SLAA)



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**Sierra Leone Community Multi-Purpose Centre  
17218 - 107 Avenue NW,  
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- It is against this background that the current SLAA Community President, Dr. Abu Conteh, made vehicle acquisition one of the projects in the 14-Point platform with which he campaigned for office. For the record, Dr. Conteh won the election on said platform.
- Presently, SLAA is the proud owner of a 15-seater van. This vehicle was purchased with funds from both provincial and federal government grants.
- The acquisition of our own vehicle culminated in an unveiling ceremony on Saturday August 20, 2022; at the Clareview Recreation Centre in the Northeast of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.
- This landmark event was open to the public and attended by SLAA members.
- The occasion was covered and publicized by Television stations like Global News and ABC News; and the online portals like Diversity Magazine, 40 Acres Magazine, and Daniel Oldfield's Corner (on Facebook).



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Figure 14-1: SLAA Community Vehicle



The following are weblinks to News Report on SLAA's Vehicle Acquisition:

## The Sierra Leone Association of Alberta unveils new community van

<https://globalnews.ca/news/9074663/sierra-leone-association-of-alberta-community-van/>

### Establishment of SLAA Committees

The executive committee of SLAA has set up several committees to help in the implementation of various aspects of the 14 Platform Points.

These committees comprise volunteers and respective executive members acting in dual capacities.

The names and scope of some of these committees change as the implementation of their respective Platform Points or projects evolve.

For example, the Vehicle Acquisition Committee changed to a Transportation Committee after the vehicle was acquired.

Similarly, the Hall Acquisition Committee has transformed into a Hall Acquisition and Management Committee after the hall was acquired.

The said Committees are as follows:

1. Social Committee
2. Education and Mentorship Committee
3. Conflict Resolution Committee
4. Media Committee
5. Newcomers Committee
6. Census Committee
7. Membership and Fundraising Committee
8. Immigration and Skilled Workers Committee
9. Seniors Committee
10. Grant-Writing Committee
11. Hall Acquisition and Management Committee
12. Electoral Committee
13. Presidential Awards Committee
14. Religious Committee
15. Vehicle Acquisition (now Transportation) Committee
16. Committee for Recent Occurrences
17. Values Committee

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## Tribute to Deceased Members

Since the current SLAA Executive Committee came into office, the association has been hit hard by the loss of several members, their spouses, or close family members here in Alberta as follows:

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1.Mr. Osman Kamara                 | 12.Madam Mafereh Yillah                  |
| 2.Mr. Walters Wakum Munde          | 13.Mr. Hassan Bangura (Ozambay)          |
| 3.Mrs. Salla Patience Cole-Davies. | 14.Mr. Alhaji Fofanah                    |
| 4.Mr. Solomon Osajiede             | 15.Ibrahim Sorie Fofanah                 |
| 5.Mr. Saidu Sesay                  | 16.Mrs. Adama Achimu Kamara (nee Kallay) |
| 6.Mr. Arnold Ayodele George        | 17.Mrs. Ethel Gabbidon                   |
| 7.Mr. Alpha Barrie                 | 18.Dr. Patrick Bickersteth               |
| 8.David Nathaniel Thorpe           | 19.Baby Abu Bakarr Sesay                 |
| 9.Mrs. Claudia Iyamide Oldfield    | 20.Baby Morenikeh Olayinka               |
| 10.Rhonda Moyah                    | 21.Mrs. Nemata Nancy Brima-Okot          |
| 11.Rev. Dr. Joseph ShekuSamai      | 22.Mr. Alfred Gbessay Kai Massaquoi      |

## Closing Remarks

This report is a summary of a wide range of details about SLAA, its status, goals, plans, programmes, projects, and other incidental activities. While most of them are internal, focusing directly on its members, many are external.

Some of the association's outward looking interactions are with government departments at all three levels (municipal, provincial, and federal), while others are collaborative interactions or courtesies enjoyed with other similar organizations.

### **The following are the organizations with which SLAA interacts in various ways:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1.Canadian Red Cross  | 12.Afrique Edmonton Dance Band                 |
| 2.Edmonton Multicultural Coalition  | 13.Liberian Friendship Society of Canada       |
| 3.Canadian Women's Foundation   | 14.Liberian Canadian Integration Council       |
| 4.Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers                                   | 15.Gambian Community Association of Alberta    |
| 5.Action for Healthy Communities  | 16.Cameroonian Association in Edmonton         |
| 6.Clareview Multicultural Centre  | 17.Kwa Consultancy                             |
| 7.CAUSE Canada  | 18.Edmonton Heritage Festival Association      |
| 8.Africa Centre – Council for the Advancement of Africans (CAAC) in Alberta | 19.Al-Rashid Mosque                            |
| 9.Diversity Magazine  | 20.Rehoboth Alliance                           |
| 10.40 Acres (Online) Magazine   | 21.Sinkunia Community Development Organization |
| 11.CIAM News  | 22. Black Canadian Women In Action Society     |
|   | 23.National Black Coalition of Canada          |

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Internally, we acknowledge the immeasurable contributions of the various social entities within our community. Over the years, SLAA worked well with these groups (as listed earlier) as they helped us tap into our diverse socio-cultural characteristics for the collective good of the community.

For example, some of our constituent groups proudly represented Sierra Leonean culture at public events like the Edmonton Heritage Festival and Diversity Magazine's AfroFest Carnival.

In this same spirit, we acknowledge the contributions of some members like Mohamed Jalloh (Wanduni) for his musical performances; Annette Jalloh's Medanne Productions and Patricia Sesay's Dimdin Podcasts; and Artist Gibril Bangura, for making similar contributions at every opportunity.

SLAA's plans, projects, and programmes during the tenure of office of Dr. Abu Conteh have either been completed or, by their nature, ongoing. We call for the active participation of members, in both financial and human resource terms.

SLAA encourages, even urges, eligible persons to formally register with the association; pay monthly subscriptions in full and on time; and continue to play active roles to the best of their abilities. Formal registration comprises paying a one-time registration fee and then providing key personal and household information to the SLAA Census Committee.

Each person has a responsibility to the rest of the community. In return, the rest of the community –

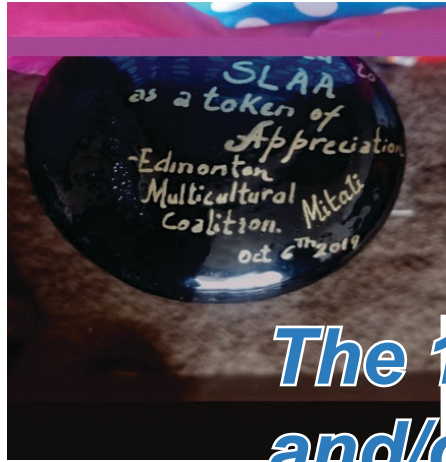
through SLAA – is responsible to each individual member. Among the key duties of each member is the meeting of all financial commitments, as best as one's personal resources allow. Conversely, SLAA has a duty to pool the resources generated from membership contributions and organizational fundraising and utilize these funds responsibly.

We received a total of Two Thousand, Eight Hundred and Thirty Five Dollars (\$857 from the Sierra Leone Canada Friendship Association's Account and \$1978 from The Sierra Leone Association of Alberta's Account) from our predecessor when we took office. We raised more than One Million Dollars (\$1,025,672.56) in grants money. We also raised a few thousand dollars from membership registration, monthly dues, and bereavement contributions. We are leaving office with more than Fifty Thousand Dollars in our accounts. These monies are assigned to community programmes and must be used for the intended purposes. We thank our members for their respective contributions as we look forward to getting more members to contribute their time, energy, skills, and/or experience as volunteers.

**Thank you,**

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**Abu Conteh, PhD.**  
**President, SLAA**



*The 14 plans, programmes, and/or projects of SLAA*

