

The Canadian Association
for Supported Employment

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022



WHO WE ARE

Letter from our Executive Director and Board President

2021/2022 has been an exciting and challenging year for CASE. Like the rest of our allies in the supported employment sector, we have been focused on increasing employment inclusion of people who experience disability in this new world of work. It is in times like this that learning with and from each other is most critical.

CASE membership and our collaboration with service providers, employers and community groups across Canada continue to be at the heart of all that we do. Together, we have accomplished great things:

- [The MentorAbility Canada initiative](#) is now in its fourth year, matching proteges and mentors for mutually beneficial learning experiences, information-sharing events, and disability employment awareness month (DEAM) celebrations in October each year.
- CASE's Learning and Development Team continues to provide high-value curriculum offerings for service providers, employers, and jobseekers, including [Supported Employment Essentials](#), [Job Development](#), [Digital Literacy](#), [Solution-Focused Practices](#), and [Guiding Principles for a Great Fit](#).
- We maintain an association-wide commitment to sharing information and resources with and from our members through [our annual conference](#), [the online resource library](#), webinars, and regular communication such as [our blog](#) and [monthly CASE newsletter](#).
- The newly-launched [CASE Innovation Lab](#) will support collaboration with organizations across the country to identify, test, evaluate, and grow innovative solutions to address workforce challenges.
- [The Diversity Works research project](#) undertook participatory, community-based research to explore the experiences of BIPOC who experience disability as they look for and maintain work with assistance from supported employment service providers. We hope that this critical research helps to improve intersectional service delivery and promotes employment opportunities for all members of our diverse communities.
- In 2021 CASE developed a submission to [the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, General Comment on the Article 27 of the UN Convention – the right to work and employment](#).

The Canadian Association for Supported Employment is able to accomplish all that it does because of the dedication, leadership, and hard work of our [volunteer board of directors](#) and [staff team](#), as well as our valued membership and colleagues who share our commitment to increasing employment inclusion in Canada. Our work is critically important, and we are so much more impactful in our efforts when we work together.

With sincere thanks for your ongoing commitment to CASE,



Joanna Goode
Executive Director



Annette Borrows
Board President

WITH THANKS

The CASE team has grown leaps and bounds over the last 3 years. Whether they sit on the Board or serve as staff, the outstanding people who are part of CASE act on their commitment to increasing employment equity in Canada and contribute their knowledge, time and skill to our supported employment sector nationwide.

Our dedicated Board of Directors come together as supported employment champions, volunteering thousands of collective hours each year to advance CASE as an association and to support employment for all.

To learn more about our Board members, [click here](#).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Annette Borrows – President (BC) | Maureen Haan – Director (ON) |
| Garth Johnson – Vice President (AB) | Deb Hotchkiss – Director (ON) |
| Ernie Thiessen – Treasurer (MB) | Jennifer Oliver – Director (AB) |
| Shelley Andrews – Secretary (NFLD) | Jude Turner – Director (NS) |
| Devon Broome – Director (PEI) | Nicole Diakite (NU) |
| Joseph Giulione – Director (QC) | |



Each member of the CASE staff team is passionate about diversifying the Canadian labour market and contributes their unique experience and skills to our important shared work.

To read more about our amazing staff team, [click here](#).

CASE STAFF

- Joanna Goode – Executive Director (ON)
- Shifat Ara – Project Manager, Diversity Works (ON)
- Mary Beshai – MentorAbility National Project Director (QC)
- Belinda Deenik – Director of Learning and Development (ON)
- Shannon Johnson - MERL Specialist, Innovation Lab (ON)
- Joy McKinnon – New Concepts Coordinator, Innovation Lab (SK)
- Rhiana Alfadili – Communications & Member Engagement Coordinator (ON)
- Albert Ho – LMS Content Developer (BC)
- Charley MacDonald – National Trainer (AB)
- Nicole MacDonald – Director of New Initiatives (NFLD)
- Jeanette Paynter – Financial Controller (NS)
- Alex Rascanu – Stakeholder Engagement Specialist (ON)
- Erin Walker – Administrative and Project Coordinator (ON)
- Shayna Young – Social Media
- Xiyu Zhou – Bookkeeper (NS)

STRATEGIC PLANNING & FUTURE VISION

The Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE) is a national association of community-based service providers and stakeholders working toward employment inclusion of people experiencing disability.

We believe that increased labour market participation makes way for full citizenship, personal capacity, and social inclusion.

We believe that all Canadians living with a disability can work and indeed have the right to earn a living wage. Employment is a valuable part of a meaningful life and represents a pathway to financial independence and an opportunity to contribute to communities, form personal bonds, learn, and grow.

We believe in the importance of the **9 supported employment principles** that guide our work:

Choice & Control – Paid Employment – Partnership & Mentoring – Full Inclusion – Job Search – Individualized – Natural Supports – Long-term Supports – Continuous Quality Improvement.

For details on our 9 Guiding Principles, [please visit our web site here.](#)



MISSION

CASE facilitates opportunities for supported employment service providers to increase employment inclusion for Canadians experiencing disability.



STRATEGIC GOALS

Developed as part of CASE's strategic plan (2019-2022), these goals allow CASE to offer value to all members, including:

Access to Information

Provide easy access to information that allows CASE members to do their jobs well, courtesy of learning from other's experiences.

Targeted Networking Opportunities

Foster collaboration amongst CASE members to build the sustainability and effectiveness of their work, and increase membership engagement.

Scaling of Promised Practices

Promote consistently high-quality work amongst CASE members at a national scale.

Unified Voice to Decision Makers

Build CASE's capacity and recognition as a go-to source for supported employment expertise in Canada.



VISION

The CASE vision is that all Canadians experiencing disability have equal opportunity to secure and sustain meaningful employment.



OUR COMMUNITY: MEMBERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

CASE members work diligently to execute our shared mission to increase employment inclusion for Canadians experiencing disability, and are our allies in shaping the future of the supported employment sector in this country. A sincere thank you to CASE members for taking part in this national network, and for your commitment to increasing the diversity of the Canadian workforce.

To see a list of our members or to find a supported employment service provider in your area, **please visit our [website here](#)**. 

To learn more about the levels and benefits of membership or to purchase your CASE membership, **visit our [website here](#)**. 

Member Benefits

CASE Members enjoy many benefits including:

- ✓ Access to a searchable membership database
- ✓ Inclusion in CASE member directory and map
- ✓ Supported employment, disability-specific, and accessibility and inclusion resources
- ✓ Early registration for CASE events and training opportunities
- ✓ Discounted registration to CASE's annual conference and training courses
- ✓ Access to members-only resources including supported employment guides, promotional products, and infographics
- ✓ Member Spotlight features in the CASE Connect newsletter and on CASE socials, and much more.

Membership Options

We have multiple CASE membership options that assist you to *increase your capacity* as a service provider, develop inclusive workplace *policies*, engage in workplace *training*, or *network* with others in the supported employment sector. Learning and networking events, supported collaboration, and resources support you on your journey.

To view our CASE membership options, **visit our [website here](#)**. 

CASE INITIATIVES

MentorAbility Canada
Learning & Development
Communication & Outreach
Conference & Awards
Diversity Works
Innovation Lab
DEAM
WASE

MENTORABILITY

MentorAbility Canada is an initiative that facilitates unique, short-term mentoring matches between Canadian employers and jobseekers who experience disability, and is part of a national effort to promote the employment of Canadians experiencing disability. It is generously funded in part by the Government of Canada's Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities.

MentorAbility Canada is coordinated by CASE in collaboration with the following provincial hub implementing partners:



Together, we provide information, experience, and tools to local service providers to facilitate meaningful connections between mentors and jobseekers who experience disability (protégés).

Since MentorAbility Canada launched in February 2019, we have engaged over 13,300 Canadians through a series of online and in-person networking and training events across the country.



170+	Site Partners
500+	Mentorships
740+	Workshops
200+	Communities Engaged

MentorAbility Canada works with over 200 Employers across the country, including two national employers (Sun Life, The Brick) and continue to engage prominent national employers on the Abilities at Work Employer Committee.

Sign up for our [mailing list](#) for more information on this exciting project!

— Sébastien got the chance to go to his mentor Thomas' workplace to talk about the work of a security guard. During the meeting, Sébastien was able to ask all his questions and even share some of his fears about how he might do on the job based on his personality. The discussion gave Sébastien a realistic idea of the work and allowed him to get clarity with respect to his expectations. Being on site also gave him the opportunity to discover other unexpected aspects of the job, which impressed him. Thomas shared his experience with enthusiasm for his job, and Sébastien is now thinking about taking a security training course.

Way to go, Sébastien!

“As a site partner, Munch Catering has realized the value of connecting and building relationships with local employers. We feel that programs like MentorAbility will help build community awareness and we appreciate that the proteges have unique and specific career development experiences. Everyone has the right to use their skills to earn a living wage and to feel as a valuable part of their community. MentorAbility can help assist this process.”

— Jessica Kozdron
Program Coordinator and Job Developer
Munch Catering

“Our experience with MentorAbility has been beneficial both personally and professionally for the participants and our company as a whole. From the interview, straight through to performance management, we can become better managers, leaders, and humans by engaging with views which may not be entirely familiar to us. It allows us to get better at what we do.”

— Chantelle Painter
The Brick
HR Recruitment and Engagement Manager

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Supported employment practitioners continue to be their organizations' top assets. The skills, knowledge, and competence required to navigate an increasingly competitive business landscape invites every organization, regardless of size and scope, to invest in learning and development. In this light, CASE recognizes that professional development is part of a comprehensive and coordinated strategy to increase the capacity and impact of the supported employment sector.

The past year has been one of extensive growth in Learning and Development (L & D) at CASE. With a goal to establish ourselves as a pivotal partner in professional development, CASE has:

increased our core certificate offerings, adding an advanced certificate program titled The Solution-Focused Career Practitioner ([for details or to register, click here!](#)),

enhanced accessibility features offered through both our online learning programs and the [CASE learning portal](#),

established processes to better identify skill gaps through needs assessment,

designed learning offerings in alignment with best practices in adult education, instructional design, evaluation, and a learner-centric approach,

developed infrastructure to collect, store, track, and analyze data, and

generated two online offerings for employers to enhance their understanding of the 9 Guiding Principles and Accessible Communication ([contact **learning@supportedemployment.ca**](mailto:learning@supportedemployment.ca) for more information on [these courses](#)).



301

Learners on CASE learning portal since it was designed



292

Completed courses

JANUARY 2021 – MARCH 2022:



120

Job Development Certificate Graduates



123

Supported Employment Certificate Graduates



21

Digital Literacy Train-the-Trainer Graduates



25

Digital Literacy Jobseeker Graduates



20

Solution-Focused Career Practitioner Graduates
NEW PROGRAM!

COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH

CASE grew our communication activities over the 2021/22 period with the aim of **strengthening our relationships with supported employment service providers, national employers, and the public.**

Newsletter



One of the primary ways CASE communicates with supported employment service providers and members is through our newsletter– the CASE Connect. Subscriptions to the CASE Connect rose from 3,300 to 4,310 and we have reached thousands more through our member engagement efforts and social media campaigns.

To stay on top of all supported employment news, sign up for the CASE Connect [here](#).

Social Media



CASE’s social media followers have increased across all platforms, specifically:

Platform	2020	2021	Percent Increase
Facebook	1,178	1,405	19%
Twitter	1,281	1,442	13%
Instagram	120	291	143%
LinkedIn	320	1,091	240%

If you’re not already following us on socials, we encourage you to do so. It’s the first place we share information, news, and events and we have many exciting initiatives, projects, and research coming out in the next year that you will not want to miss!

CASE Blog



The CASE Blog is also an extensive resource for all things supported employment. CASE publishes blog posts on everything from current research, professional development opportunities, MentorAbility success stories, accessibility and inclusion tips, job vacancies we have at CASE, and much more.

To view our blog, [click here](#).

We’re also always looking for guest bloggers so if you are a supported employment professional, ally, or have lived disability experience we welcome you to reach out to communications@supportedemployment.ca to share your blog post ideas.

CASE Podcast



The Abilities at Work podcast published 13 episodes (of which 3 were in French) from July to October 2021, and it’s available on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify and other podcasting platforms. Each episode is available in audio format, and has also been transcribed and translated into French.

[Click here](#) to learn more and to listen to past episodes.

The next season of Abilities at Work is set to launch in Fall 2022.

CONFERENCE & AWARDS

The 26th annual CASE conference titled *Innovation in Changing Times*, was held online from September 28-30, 2021. Our 2nd virtual networking event offered our 333 delegates many opportunities to connect including interactive sessions, a networking and idea sharing space, and virtual exhibitor booths. All events were educational and collaborative, and offered insights on best practices within the supported employment sector.

Planning has already begun for the World 2023 conference in Vancouver so [follow this page](#) for all the exciting details.

Awards

Each year, CASE celebrates outstanding contributions to the promotion of inclusive employment in Canada. Award recipients are leaders and role models who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to reducing barriers to employment for persons experiencing disability and to building diverse workforces.

At the 2021 CASE Annual Conference, we recognized LiveWorkPlay, Meridian Meats & Seafood, and Sydney Kidder for their inspirational leadership and dedication to excellence.

WILTSHIRE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

The Wiltshire Award of Excellence in Supported Employment award is given to an outstanding individual or agency that have contributed significantly to the increased labour market participation, full citizenship, and personal capacity for Canadians experiencing disability. The criteria for this prestigious award are modeled after the inspiring work of Sean Wiltshire, CASE's Founding President. Sean has dedicated his 30+ year career to supporting those with barriers to employment and is a pillar of Canada's supported employment community.



LiveWorkPlay provides direct supports and services in the Ottawa area to deliver its mission:

helping the community welcome and include people with intellectual disabilities, autistic persons, and individuals with a dual diagnosis to live, work, and play as valued citizens. The organization supports 200+ adults and their families every year through the provision of employment support, community connecting, and supported independent living supports.

MARK WAFER AWARD FOR BUSINESS EXCELLENCE

The **Mark Wafer Award for Business Excellence** is an award based on the triumphs of inclusive employment champion and former Tim Hortons franchisee, Mark Wafer. It recognizes outstanding businesses that have made significant contributions to the promotion of full citizenship and personal capacity for persons with disabilities through the facilitation of increased labour market participation and outcomes.

PHILLIP EMMERSON AWARD FOR EMPLOYMENT EXCELLENCE

The **Phillip Emmerson Award for Employment Excellence award** recognizes an individual who has made significant contributions to the promotion of full citizenship and personal capacity through employment and innovation in the workplace within Canada. The inaugural award was presented to its namesake Phillip Emmerson at the 25th annual CASE supported employment conference in September 2020.



Meridian Meats & Seafood, a series of family-owned neighbourhood butcher shops throughout the Lower Mainland, has been committed to hiring people with diverse-abilities for years. They're known for their incredible collaborations with local community organizations and WorkBC, and for participating in Spectrum Works – a job fair for individuals with autism, and in Ready, Willing, and Able – a national initiative focused on increasing labour force participation of individuals with autism or intellectual disabilities.

Meridian CFO Brody McDearmid said "It's important to note that hiring people with disabilities is not about charity. The fact is that hiring people with diverse-abilities makes good business sense."



In 2021, Sydney Kidder first met the staff at Regina's KOKO Patisserie through the MentorAbility Canada program, but it was her passion and excellence as a baker that led to her employment. Sydney has continued as a skilled employee and a valued colleague, and through her example has contributed to the promotion of full citizenship and inclusive employment in her community. You can listen to her employment story [here](#).

Read more about the CASE awards of excellence or nominate a workplace inclusion champion you admire [here!](#)

DIVERSITY WORKS

In 2021, CASE initiated an important research project called Diversity Works. Through funding received from Economic and Social Development Canada's *Workplace opportunities: Removing barriers to equity program*, CASE set out to explore the supported employment experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) who experience disability.

This research project captured the experiences of:

- BIPOC jobseekers who experience disability,
- Employment service providers who assist BIPOC jobseekers experiencing disability, and
- Employers as they strive to diversify their staff.



Since launching in November 2021, Diversity Works has engaged over

100+ BIPOC jobseekers experiencing disability,

50+ service providers, and

30+ employers.



Research participants were engaged through surveys, focused group discussions, and in-depth interviews. The project also engaged youth jobseekers through photovoice – an innovative research method that uses photography and group dialogue to help marginalized individuals deepen their understanding of a community issue or concern and to highlight their perceptions of being a BIPOC individual experiencing disability in the workplace.

The objectives of the Diversity Works research was to:

- ✓ **improve service providers understanding of barriers that contribute to the underrepresentation BIPOC jobseekers who experience disability in the Canadian workforce**
- ✓ **increase service provider capacity to engage in intersectional service delivery, and**
- ✓ **to address barriers to inclusion.**

To supplement this research, CASE conducted training for over 50 supported employment service providers on intersectionality, diversity, inclusion, and equity to increase the capacity of service providers to adopt an intersectional approach to service delivery. A round table with supported employment sector leadership also took place to understand the challenges and opportunities in ensuring diversity, inclusivity, and belonging within all layers of an organization.

To read the results of this groundbreaking research, [visit our Diversity Works page here.](#)

INNOVATION LAB

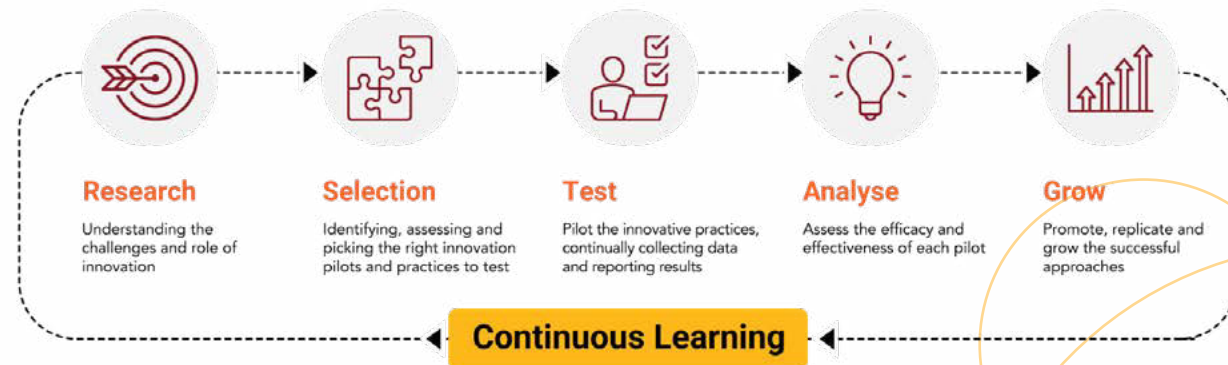
Despite the great efforts that have been made to diversify the Canadian labour force, Statistics Canada reports that in 2017, 3.7 million working-age Canadians identified as having a disability and that only three in five (59%) were employed¹. COVID has substantially worsened the situation. Currently, approximately 1 million Canadian jobseekers experiencing disability are unemployed or underemployed². Given current workforce shortages, Canadian employers coast to coast urgently need the skills, education, and experience of this untapped talent resource.

In 2021, in an attempt to spur the change required to turn this around, CASE formed its Innovation Lab — a specialized team to support, promote, and share learnings from innovative collaborations with community organizations to remove barriers to employment for those experiencing disability and therefore, strengthening the Canadian economy as a whole.

The CASE Innovation Lab received a grant through the federal government’s Sectoral Initiatives Program (SIP) to support up to 27 community organizations to identify, support, test, and grow innovative solutions that facilitate the sustained and valued contributions that persons experiencing disability can make to our workplaces and communities.

We invite you to share your transformative supported employment project ideas with us – ideas that *create opportunities, connect people, and crush the barriers* that prevent persons with disabilities from participating fully in work and society.

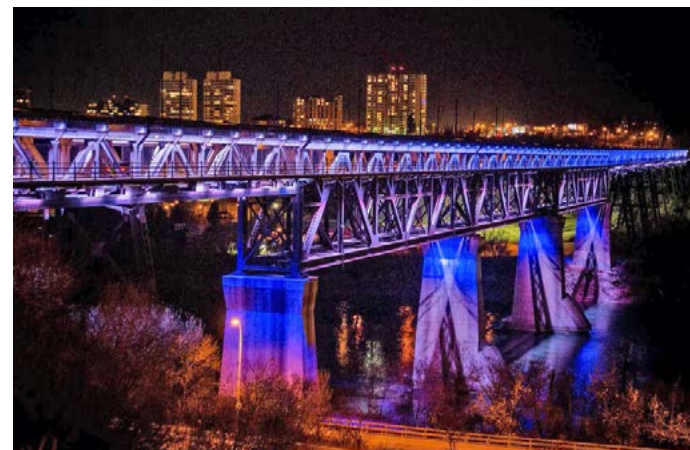
For more information and to apply, visit the **CASE Innovation Lab website [here](#)**.



1 <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-654-x/89-654-x2018002-eng.htm#a9>
2 <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200827/dq200827c-eng.htm>

DEAM

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH



National Disability Employment Awareness Month (DEAM) has been a federal initiative in the United States every October since 1945 and has been gaining momentum in Canada since it was introduced in 2010. Manitoba became the first province to proclaim DEAM that same year, with Saskatchewan following suit in 2011, and British Columbia, Alberta, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador securing proclamations shortly thereafter.

CASE proudly celebrates DEAM every October, and 2021 marked our 3rd Annual 31 Days of DEAM social media campaign which highlights the work being done by service providers and employers across the country to diversity the Canadian labour market.

CASE's MentorAbility team also led an Employer Engagement Campaign called *Cheers to Inclusion!* which included over 40 DEAM events across Canada.



The MentorAbility team also partnered with the Ontario Disability Employment Network, on their **LightItUp! for NDEAM™** on October 21, an exciting event that saw over **300 locations in 113 Canadian communities** lit up in purple and blue lights in support of disability-inclusive employment and hiring.

To find out about DEAM celebrations in your community, follow our DEAM page [here](#).



WASE

WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

CASE is a proud member of the World Association for Supported Employment (WASE), and serves as a voluntary member of the WASE Board of Directors. CASE strives to leverage collaborative opportunities with WASE and share best practices to strengthen Canada's supported employment sector, and to encourage employment inclusion worldwide.

Join our [mailing list](#) to receive updates on our ongoing international efforts and partnerships.

To deepen discussions around employment inclusion globally, CASE, in partnership with Inclusion BC and the BC Employment Network, will be cohosting the 2nd World Supported Employment Conference in Vancouver, B.C., in 2023. This conference creates a global platform for service providers, community organizations, and researchers to share knowledge and develop and nurture new ideas and innovations to advance employment equity around the world.

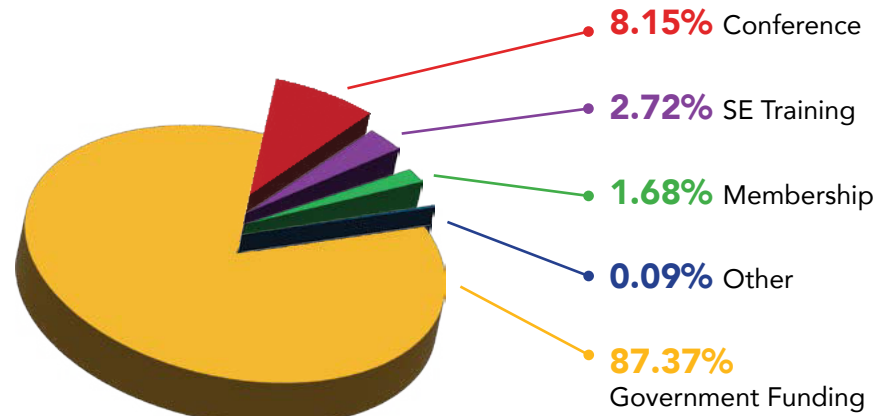
Details and registration information will be shared soon so be sure to follow our World Conference webpage at <https://supportedemployment.ca/conference/world-2023/> for all the exciting details.



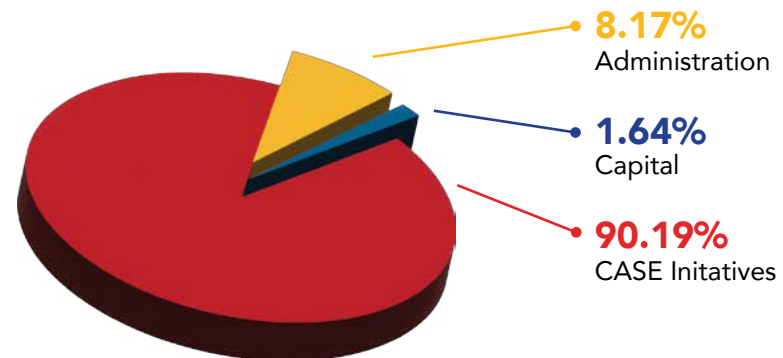
FINANCIALS

CASE's success would not be possible without our valued members and broader CASE community. We sincerely thank each of you for your continued support this year, and we look forward to the exciting initiatives and opportunities that lie ahead for the CASE community.

Revenues



Expenses



GET INVOLVED

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