Donor profile

Mitchell fosters change through art

Cass Mitchell believes that art has the ability to foster change in ways many of us would never consider.

The owner of Tatts by Cass made this discovery almost by accident, three years ago when she was looking a way to do something meaningful for International Women's Day. Cass had created a tee shirt design and reached out to the Chinook Sexual Assault Centre to see if we would partner with her on a fundraising initiative. It was a truly spontaneous idea. A shot in the dark perhaps. But, it connected.

"It was one of those things that was a little spark of an idea that turned into something I couldn't have planned or orchestrated or pitched," she relates.

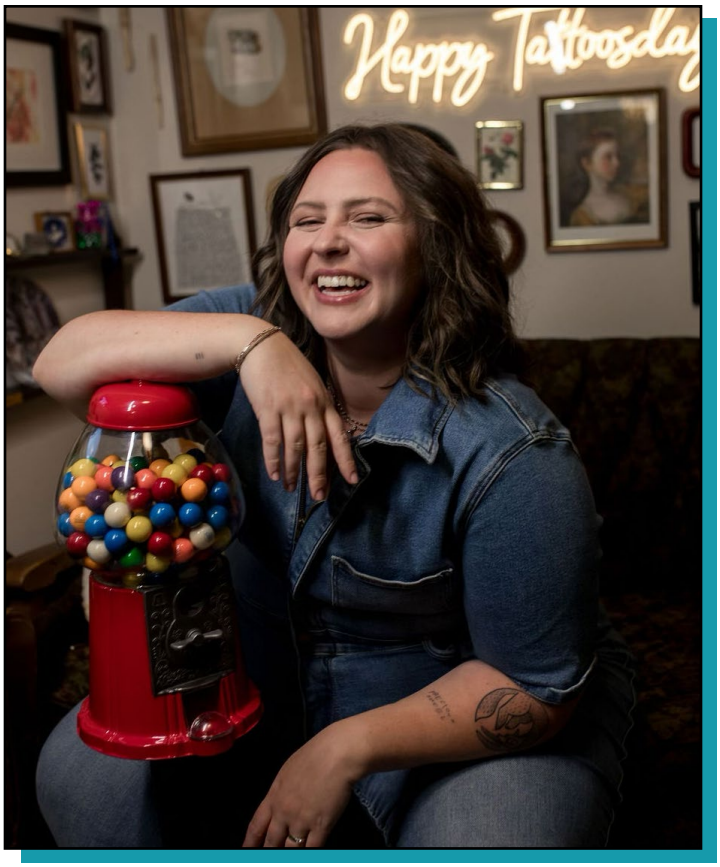
In one week Cass was able to sell over 70 shirts. A month later she put together another design for a successful Sexual Violence Awareness Month fundraiser. Cass says these two campaigns showed the impact that artwork on apparel could have.

"Not only is it holding meaning in such an important message, but it gets more out into the world," she explains. "It gets to be out in our grocery stores and coffee shops and at events."

That sense of connection was enforced last spring when Cass created a piece of artwork for the



Cass Mitchell presents Chinook Sexual Assault CEO Kristine Cassie with the proceeds from the 2025 Sexual Violence Awareness Month apparel campaign.



Chinook Sexual Assault Centre donor Cass Mitchell.

Impacted Unveiled" Beyond the Silence Art Show held at the Yates Theatre Galley. The show, which featured works from dozens of local artists, was designed to foster conversations about sexual violence through art. Cass says she was touched by the feedback she received from the show and the stories shared by some of the people who purchased apparel featuring the same design.

"To be able to take these incredible themes and meanings and to have it represented in this way makes it accessible in a way that words can't."

Cass enthusiastically agreed to participate in Sexual Violence Awareness Month again this year and helped bring on board fellow artist Andrew Page of Andrew Page Tattooing. They created (HELD), an apparel program featuring designs from both artists which are based on the values represented by the Chinook Sexual Assault Centre.

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"For us to be able to take that same umbrella of stories and values and then create things that are so vastly different and speak to different pieces of the story is so cool . This is just going to another level of having art speak to message."

Cass says she has always loved art and being creative, but she never thought it would become career. Trained as a social worker, with a passion for people, she envisioned a future helping others in her chosen field. Then life happened.

Married with three young girls and experiencing some personal struggles, Cass started working with a friend who had started a tattoo apprenticeship. Cass was helping with tattoo designs and client consultations when her friend suggested that she take the tattoo machine in hand.

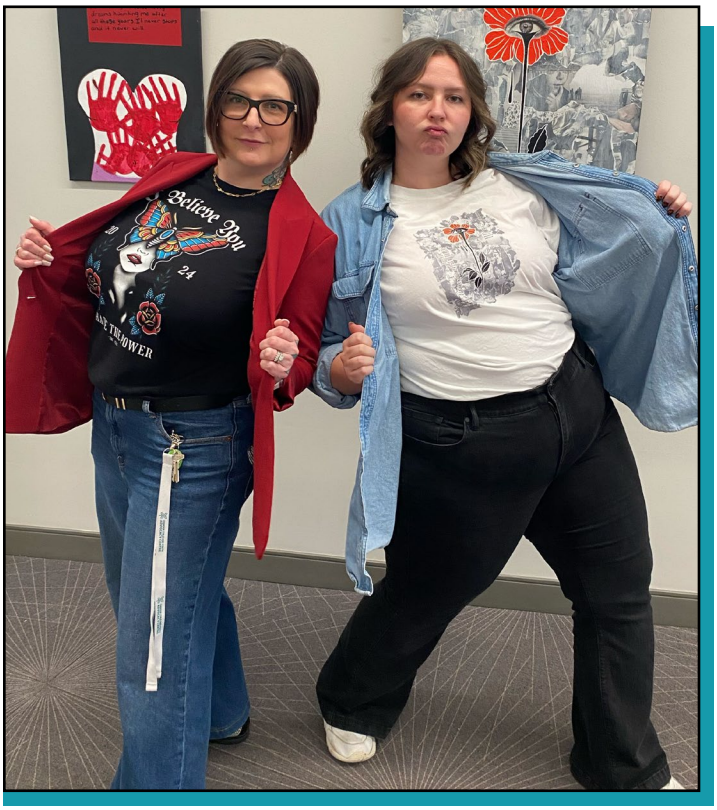
"I never expected to even have a tattoo in my life, let alone do them."

Unexpectedly, she loved the art form and the unique way it allowed her to combine her artistic skills with her love of people.

"I fell in love with the ability to capture meaning and capture storytelling and memory through this art form."



Chinook Sexual Assault Centre staff wearing (HELD) apparel from artists Cass Mitchell and Andrew Page.



Chinook Child and Youth Advocacy Centre Manager Cheryl Patterson and Cass Mitchell rooking the 2024 and 2025 t-shirt designs.

It wasn't long before Cass had fashioned a home-based business centered around a cozy little studio with an inviting atmosphere that she says encouraged clients to relax and share.

She also added designs for apparel and stickers and eventually outgrew her home space. This fall she moved into a new business location with the same welcoming atmosphere of her studio at home.

Cass hopes her rather unexpected business evolution and her fundraising partnership with the Chinook Sexual Assault Centre serves as an example that there are plenty of ways to make a difference in the community.

"I think that being able to show support for organizations that provide important resources in our community is something we need to do."

The (HELD) apparel program runs through until the end of may. Click here if you are interested in ordering.