

# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2016



AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2016



UNIVERSITAS  
FINANCIAL

# A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND CEO

## 2016: Organizational Structure and Planning



Our industry is constantly evolving. To stand out in a highly competitive industry, and to be able to meet the growing needs and expectations of well-informed clients, we must be prepared to take stock. We need to see what works and build on our strengths, but also realize what we can improve.

And that's what we did in 2016. The last year was marked by two key actions: we restructured our various business sectors and established our strategic plan for 2017-2020. **Our top priority is to place the client at the centre of all our efforts and our business solutions.**

To increase positive customer experience in the immediate through concrete solutions, we implemented the Kaizen Lean management approach, a strategy that works to constantly improve the performance of our organization. The resulting changes combined with enhanced technological solutions allowed us to make significant headway in our effort to increase customer satisfaction. The main

improvements include a 65% drop in our call centre's waiting time, a nine-fold increase in the processing speed of client requests, and new functionalities to simplify online transactions.

It was also essential for management not to rely solely on a short-term vision. Over the past 12 months, we have worked hard to plan our growth over the next four years, always keeping our focus on our main goal **to offer an unmatched customer experience!**

To achieve this, we have set ambitious objectives! These include enhancing our product offer, optimizing the efficiency of operations, and increasing the frequency of our contact with the families we serve. These efforts began in 2017 under the theme "**Client-Focused!**" To be able to offer products and services tailored to the real expectations of clients, we must first get to know and understand them better. We must use their language and meet them on their turf. This is our goal for the first year of our strategic plan for 2017-2020.

The attainment of our objectives would not be feasible without our greatest assets: dedicated, qualified employees; reputable business partners, recognized as leaders in their areas of expertise; and our sales force of experienced representatives, inspired by the mission to give all children access to higher education. Together, we know ours is a winning team that will work hard to realize this action plan.

*Gaston Roy*  
President and CEO



# OUR MISSION OUR VALUES

Our strategic thinking led us to redefine our organization's mission and core values

## NEW MISSION

In order to develop a meaningful mission in direct line with our business goals and company culture, we chose a strong mission statement and principles we believe in to guide our standards of business conduct.

At Universitas Financial, we:

- promote education, academic perseverance and higher education for all;
- strive to help all children, regardless of background;
- develop savings strategies tailored to the needs of our clients;
- guide our clients every step of the way until they reach their goals;
- contribute to social and economic prosperity from one generation to the next.

The combination of these elements naturally led us to our new mission:

**We offer the stepping stone to a bright future for those who dare to dream!**

## OUR CORE VALUES

Our values are closely linked to the organization's goals and accomplishments. They give meaning to our actions, create a decision-making framework and guide communication. In this sense, they become administrative standards. Given our objectives for the years to come, it was self-evident that we should refocus our efforts on values that held meaning for all.

### PERFORMANCE

We deliver results. Every day we challenge ourselves to innovate and enhance.

### INTEGRITY

We adhere to the highest standards of ethical principles and industry practices.

### COMMITMENT

We are fully committed to our mission and social prosperity through education.

### EMPATHY

We listen, we care and we put people first.



# A CULTURE OF **HIGH PERFORMANCE**

Universitas in numbers

© Photos : Stéphane Groleau

## **SAFETY WITH RETURNS**

We are always mindful of our goal to help parents fund part or all of their children's post-secondary education, which is why we are proud to offer our clients a **safe investment** that generates **competitive returns**.

## **\$500,000 FOR OUR BENEFICIARIES**

The rigorous and efficient management of our budgets in 2016 allowed us to return a **surplus of \$500,000** to our plans. The non-profit structure of the Universitas Foundation of Canada allows us to return to our plans any portion of the administration fee in excess of the capital required for company growth and maintenance.

The sum was returned to the account holding the funds for payments to our beneficiaries. This translated into the decrease of our administration fee, which totaled **1.15% rather than the expected 1.19%** of assets under management in 2016. Since 2005, we have returned nearly **\$4.7M in excess sums** to our plans—this is great news for all the families who choose to invest with Universitas!

### **REFLEX\***

Return over 10 years

**3.86%**

Return over 5 years

**3.05%**

### **UNIVERSITAS\***

Return over 10 years

**3.53%**

Return over 5 years

**3.91%**

### **INDIVIDUAL\***

Return over 10 years

**2.41%**

Return over 5 years

**1.21%**

\* Net return at market value.



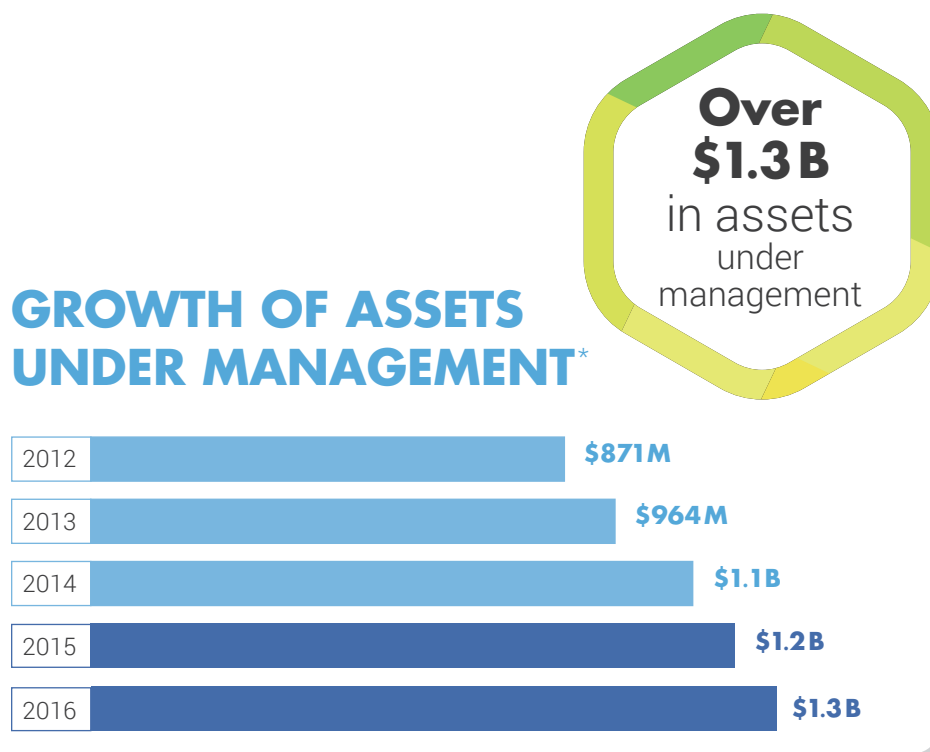
Gross return of our bond investments	<b>over 5 years</b>	<b>3.13%</b>
Gross return of our equity investments	<b>over 5 years</b>	<b>10.26%</b>
EAPs and returned savings so far	<b>Payments issued</b>	<b>\$697.5 M</b>

**over 221,000**  
beneficiaries  
with an RESP in force

**4.60%**  
increase  
compared to 2015

**over 167,000**  
active subscribers

**3.90%**  
increase  
compared to 2015



\* As at December 31 of each year.





A CULTURE OF

# INTEGRITY

Sound management and transparency

## APPOINTMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 2016, **Yves Lacasse** was appointed Chairman of both the Universitas Foundation Board of Directors and the Board of Universitas Management Inc. Lacasse is an experienced attorney, an active member of his community, a partner with the law firm Joli-Coeur Lacasse, and has served as a member of the Universitas Foundation Board of Directors since 2003. He succeeds Jean Marchand, who remains active within the organization he founded.

The Universitas Foundation's Board of Directors was also pleased to welcome its newest director, **François Lavoie**, B.A.A., B.A., Adm. A., Pl. Fin. Lavoie is Senior Vice-president, Wealth Management, at Professionals' Financial.

## A NEW INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO MANAGER

Further to the Investment Committee's recommendation, our number of **portfolio managers has been increased to five**. As a result, **State Street Global Advisors Ltd.** will join our team of equity portfolio managers. This world-class advisor brings a new equity indexing strategy to the table with a view to optimize returns, while offering the advantage of lower management fees.





At Universitas, we firmly believe that an **educated society drives social and economic prosperity forward!** For more than 50 years, our number one goal has been to give every child the opportunity to pursue a post-secondary education through our financial products, but also through our social involvement. In 2016, we continued to support causes that promote academic perseverance, school success and higher education for all children!

## Alloprof

For nearly 10 years, Universitas has supported Alloprof initiatives to provide homework help and free lessons to Quebec students. Alloprof has been dedicated to its mission for 20 years and has provided **help to over 15 million students** in 2016 alone!

## Educaid

In 2016, Universitas employees raised nearly **\$6,000** to contribute to the success of Educaid, an organism with the mission to provide financial assistance to high-school students from less-privileged backgrounds. Through academic perseverance scholarships, Educaid has helped hundreds of students obtain their first diploma!

## Literacy Foundation

For the first year, Universitas offered its support to the Literacy Foundation by presenting the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of its annual benefit show. The event raised nearly **\$35,000** for the benefit of children and adults who struggle with illiteracy.

## Forces AVENIR

For the **11<sup>th</sup> consecutive year**, Universitas partnered with Forces AVENIR, an organization that aims to recognize, honour, and promote the commitment of young people to projects that contribute to the development of socially conscious, active, and responsible citizens.

alloprof

**Educaid**  
Educational Assistance Fund

**Literacy Foundation**  
Words of hope

**FORCES AVENIR**  
RECOGNIZING + PROMOTING STUDENT COMMITMENT



## A CULTURE OF **EMPATHY**

Happy employees do MORE  
to ensure customer satisfaction

Rate of employee and  
representative pride

**88.2%**

Payroll invested in  
professional development

**\$180,620** OR  
2.24%

Professional development  
for head office employees

**2,177** HOURS

Self-employed representatives  
devoted to our mission

**175**

Passionate employees  
working at the head office

**114**

Management positions  
held by women

**56%**

Continued education  
for representatives

**42** HOURS

Training program offered  
to new recruits

**22** WEEKS

The well-being of employees has always been a priority for management. We firmly believe that **happy employees make happy clients**. We make every effort to ensure our employees are fulfilled, both in their professional and personal lives.

### REEE-UNI: RECOGNIZING GROUP EFFORTS

For several years, individual recognition has been emphasized. In 2016, we added a new award to our **recognition program to reward a team or a committee for its group contribution to the success of our organization and the enhancement of customer experience**.

This year, we congratulate the employees of our **customer service**, who won the first edition of this award in recognition of their exemplary team spirit and the consistent quality of their work.

### WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Once again our efforts to provide employees with a healthy work-life balance were recognized in 2016, with our nomination for the **Prix Équité Thérèse-Casgrain**. This prestigious award recognizes projects carried out by public, quasi-public, private or community organizations that promote equality between men and women.

**"If you take care of your employees,  
they will take care of your customers."**

*Richard Branson*





# CONNECTING MORE THAN EVER

**Newsletter** **120,631**  **24%**  
Number of subscribers increase over 2015

**Website** Nearly **400,000**  **11%**  
Number of visits increase over 2015

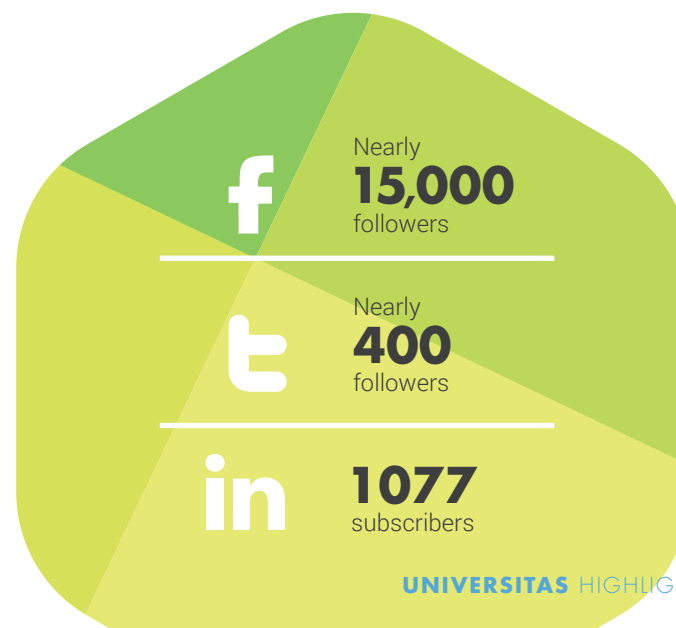
**Blog** **65,000**  **25%**  
Number of views increase over 2015

**Client Space** Nearly **90,000**  
Number of subscribers and beneficiaries who registered

**On-Site Presence** **110**  
Events and kiosks

Maintaining an open dialogue with current and potential clients is essential. That's why we meet them on their turf through social media!

The proximity we develop with families allows us to be more in tune with our clients and gain a better understanding of their actual financial concerns. It also gives us the ability to react swiftly, adapt to needs, and answer questions instantly. In a nutshell, this proximity allows us to **be there for our clients!**



# THE ROAD TO 2020

**After a year marked with strategic reorganisation and alignment, Universitas Financial is ready to move forward with renewed assurance. More Client-Focused than ever, the organization trusts in its team's expert knowledge of RESPs to support families in their savings projects.**

The goals we have set may be ambitious, but our motivation matches the challenges ahead. In the coming year, our team will:

Focus on  
**ENHANCING  
CLIENT  
RELATIONSHIPS**  
on a daily basis and in  
our decision-making  
process.

**PURSUE OUR  
MISSION**  
to offer all families  
products that favour  
access to education  
and academic  
perseverance.

**STRENGTHEN**  
our standing as an  
RESP industry leader.

Continue to **GROW  
AND PROSPER**  
to ensure the families  
we serve benefit from  
our achievements.

**INNOVATE**



# UNIVERSITAS

FINANCIAL

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