

CONGRESS PROGRAM

2027 North American Skål Congress

May 6-9, 2027 | Calgary, Alberta

Grey Eagle Resort & Casino

Come for the Party - Stay for the Congress!

YOUR PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

Wednesday, May 5 2
Early arrivals and group dinner

Thursday, May 6 2
Board meetings, optional tours and opening reception

Friday, May 7 3-5
Keynotes, cultural discovery and Boundary Ranch

Saturday, May 8 6-8
Connections, Inglewood and the closing gala

Sunday, May 9 8
Farewell and post-congress touring

Program edition: November 17, 2026

DAY ONE

06 Thursday, May 6

Wednesday, May 5 | Early Arrivals

SKAL Canada and USA Board members and companions will enjoy a group dinner at a SKAL member restaurant before Thursday's SKAL Board meetings. Dinner priced separate from the congress and must be pre-booked.

9:00 am **SKAL Board Meetings**

SKAL Canada and USA full-day Board meetings at the Grey Eagle Resort & Casino.

Companions Optional Tours

Priced separately

Companions and early arrivals have several local tours to choose:

Tour Option #1: Burwood Distillery - Craft Bitter's Experience

Discover the art and flavour of bitters at Burwood Distillery, where an expert mixologist reveals their history, role in classic cocktails and the craft behind the perfect Old Fashioned. Put your palate to work in a hands-on sensory experience and create a custom bitters blend uniquely your own - a spirited taste of Calgary's growing craft beverage culture.

Tour Option #2: Indigenous Wellness Circle

Gather in circle to explore Indigenous traditions, stories and perspectives on wellness, community, and connection to the land. Share bannock and Saskatoon berry jam, then create a personal wellness product using traditional plants and herbal medicines long used for healing and self-care. This experience invites meaningful connection through shared stories, learning and conversation.

7:00 pm **NASC 2027 Official Opening Reception**



Chief Ellery Starlight

The Tsuut'ina Nation warmly welcomes all fully registered delegates and companions to the official NASC 2027 Opening Celebration at the Grey Eagle Resort & Casino. Meet your hosts, enjoy performances by Tsuut'ina Nation dancers, drummers and singers, savour award-winning Indigenous-inspired cuisine and get set for an unforgettable evening to kick-off NASC 2027.

Enjoy the nightly hospitality suite following the formal events of the day.

07

DAY TWO | MORNING

Friday, May 7

9:00 am **Keynote Speaker Joel Cowley**

CEO, Calgary Stampede



Calgary Stampede Park BMO Centre



Joel Cowley

This morning starts with a field trip for all fully registered delegates and companions to the world-famous Calgary Stampede Park. Visit the new 1M square foot BMO Centre and learn about the 20-year plan for the Calgary Stampede from Joel Cowley, CEO. If possible, we hope to give you a sneak-peek tour of the new Scotia Place across the street where the NHL Calgary Flames will drop the puck for the 2027/28 season.

Meet Joel Cowley

Joel Cowley is an agricultural industry leader and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Calgary Stampede since September 2021. Previously, he served as President and CEO of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo for seven years, overseeing its operations, employees, and volunteers. During his 15 years there, he was credited with growth, attendance records, and increased commitment to education. Cowley holds an MBA from Michigan State and MSc and BSc degrees in Animal Science from Texas A&M and Colorado State, respectively.

Joel will be sharing the Calgary Stampede's new 20-year vision and how the entire district is being transformed over the next few years. The Park is coming to life with the new Scotia Place Event Centre, a new 13-storey, 320-room Marriott Autograph Collection boutique hotel and more hotels to come. Everything you will learn from Joel is a massive game changer for Calgary's tourism industry. Come learn what we are up to in Calgary that has spurred on our tourism industry, and perhaps take home ideas for your destination.

12:00 pm | Light Lunch

Travel back to the Grey Eagle for a light lunch followed by our second Keynote Speaker, Alex Sarian, CEO of Werklund Centre.

07

DAY TWO | AFTERNOON

Friday, May 7

1:30 pm **Keynote Speaker Alex Sarian**

CEO, Werklund Centre





Werklund Centre transformation | Alex Sarian

Alex Sarian is President & CEO of Werklund Centre where he is overseeing the country's largest cultural infrastructure project-securing over $500 million in public and private investment, leading a full institutional rebrand, and keeping the organization operational, financially resilient, and publicly trusted through sustained change.

Before returning to Canada, Alex spent two decades in New York City, including senior roles at Lincoln Center, advising organizations, governments, and foundations across fifteen countries on cultural strategy and transformation.

Named by the Globe and Mail as one of Canada's top cultural leaders, Alex serves on global boards across technology, tourism, economic development, education, and philanthropy. Born in Toronto, raised in Buenos Aires, and shaped by a multilingual, multicultural career across five continents.

Alex will be sharing the tremendous transformation of Calgary's arts and culture scene. The world will call it iconic. Calgary will call it home. The Werklund Centre Transformation and the Olympic Plaza Transformation are a generational investment in the Werklund Centre campus, the largest cultural infrastructure investment currently underway in Canada.

Together, these projects are a comprehensive investment in Calgary's downtown core that will do far more than expand and modernize Calgary's premiere performing arts centre - it will revitalize our downtown, fundamentally changing the way people perceive, experience, and talk about the arts. This endeavour will result in a vibrant, accessible, safe, and welcoming centre for all to gather, celebrate cultural identities, improve social cohesion, and enrich lives - both inside the venues and outside on historic Olympic Plaza.

DAY TWO | CULTURE AND THE ROCKIES

07 Friday, May 7

1:30 pm **Option for Fully Registered Companions**

Fully registered companions will have the option to visit the Tsuut'ina Nation on a guided tour.

Tsuut'ina Cultural Museum and Buffalo Paddock Tour



Enjoy a guided experienceof the Tsuut'ina Cultural Museum for storytelling and history, and an introduction to Tsuut'ina language and traditions. Then a short ride to the Nation's Buffalo Paddock to visit the buffalo herd and learn about their deep cultural and historical significance to the Tsuut'ina people.

Alternatively, companions are also welcome to attend the Alex Sarian keynote or enjoy a free afternoon.

4:30 pm **Boundary Ranch**

Kananaskis Country in the Canadian Rockies



Boundary Ranch in the heart of Kananaskis Country

All fully registered delegates and companions will departfor our famous Alberta beef BBQ in the majestic Canadian Rockies. Our 45-minute coach ride brings us to Boundary Ranch in the heart of Kananaskis Country. Enjoy our famous Alberta beef dinner, entertainment, and a special evening set at the foot of the Rockies. Bring a warm jacket as it does cool off quickly in the mountains!

DAY THREE | CONNECTIONS AND DISCOVERY

08 Saturday, May 8

9:00 am **SKAL Connections Round Table**

SKAL members are invited to join the popular Connections session - a moderated round-table discussion with fellow SKAL members from North America.

11:00 am **Enjoy Calgary’s Historic Inglewood**

All fully registered delegates and spouses are invited to enjoy a self-paced walking tour of Calgary’s Historic Inglewood.



Historic Inglewood, Calgary

Inglewood is an off-the-beaten path, local arts and culture hot spot known as 'the hood' creating Calgary's Arts & Industrial Heritage District. Located along 9th Avenue and surrounding commercial area, on the outer core of Downtown Calgary, Inglewood YYC is a place to experience an urban landscape like no other with shopping, dining, entertainment, events, and nature trails. Inglewood captures a vintage-retro, hipster style that is eclectic, arty, and gritty.

Being Calgary's original main street, 9th Avenue SE, formally known as Atlantic Avenue and Whiskey Row, has been around since the early 1880’s. With the creation of this historic avenue came numerous industries, such as sawmills, notorious hotels, saloons, and of course the Brewery, known as 'Brewery Flats'. These establishments in addition to many others helped shaped the foundation for Calgary’s oldest neighbourhood - Inglewood.

DAY THREE | HISTORIC INGLEWOOD CONTINUED

08 Saturday, May 8

11:00 am **Smithbilt Hats and Historic Inglewood**

Smithbilt Hats: a Calgary tradition

Our drop-off point is at the proudly owned and operated Smithbilt Hats - with so much more than hats! Smithbilt's founder, Morris Schumiatcher, was only 18 in 1910 when he convinced his father to move to Canada from Russia. Taking the way around language barriers, they were renamed Smith.

At first Smithbilt produced mostly dress hats with small brims, styles that flourished in the East and in Europe. In 1926, however Morris began a co-operative effort with local businessmen and the Stampede Board to promote western wear for spectators and participants in the Calgary Stampede.

Today, the company is owned & operated by Cam Clark; a proud supporter of the Calgary Stampede, dedicated to the preservation of western heritage values and traditions.

Explore at your own pace

After your free time exploring Smithbilt Hats, tour Inglewood at your leisure using our provided maps and wayfinding guides. Meet at the last stop at Cold Garden for, you guessed it, a cold one - leaving time to sample their great products.

RETURN TRANSPORTATION

Group transportation leaves Cold Garden at 3:45 pm to take everyone back to the Grey Eagle Resort.

Smithbilt Hats > Historic Inglewood > Cold Garden

08

DAY THREE | AN EVENING TO REMEMBER

Saturday, May 8

6:00 pm **Closing Reception and Gala Dinner**

Heritage Park | Gasoline Alley Museum



Gasoline Alley Museum at Heritage Park

Heritage Park Historical Village is Canada's largest living history museum - a short 10-minute coach ride from the Grey Eagle Resort. It is situated on 127 acres of parkland on the banks of the Glenmore Reservoir. It is among the city's most visited tourist attractions.

Our closing evening will take place in the stunning Gasoline Alley Museum where you can explore Canada's largest fully restored vintage vehicles, exhibits, and gas pumps collection. The evening promises exceptional cuisine, entertainment, and dining amongst the exhibits.

Sunday, May 9 | SKAL Congress Concludes

This morning is the day we say good-bye as NASC 2027 concludes. But we know many of you will be staying on to enjoy the post tours available throughout Alberta including our beautiful Canadian Rockies through Canmore, Banff, Lake Louise, and Jasper.

Book your pre and post tours on the **NASC2027.com website**.

REMEMBER - Come for the Party - Stay for the Congress!

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