



Annual Report 2006

Learning, a Foundation for Life

Calgary Learns is a granting agency that supports **foundational learning** for adult Calgarians. We make community-based learning accessible, and promote the value of lifelong learning. **Foundational learning** refers to the basic skills adults require to fully participate in life, community and work.

Congratulations to Calgary Learns and all member organizations for making such a profound difference in the lives of adult learners.

Your commitment to providing **foundational learning opportunities** means that more than 15,000 Calgarians had a chance to strengthen their skills, enabling them to fully participate in life, community and work. I also want to acknowledge your dedication to ensuring all funded programs provide learners with pathways to related programs or next steps.

Learners are reaping the benefits. More than 90 per cent have indicated that not only are they satisfied with the learning provided, but they are also meeting their personal learning goals. Thank you for supporting Albertans during their learning journeys. — *The Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology*

When we learn, we grow into the people we are here to become. Without **foundational learning** our options are limited and we fail to meet — or to even recognize — our own potential. — *Janet Lane, Literacy Alberta*

Meeting the demands of a society built on technology is becoming increasingly difficult for low literate learners. **Foundational learning** increases their capacity to participate fully in their community, families, and workplace.— *Elaine Cairns & Laureen Mackenzie, The Further Education Society*

The irony about being in the information age is that foundational learning — the basics of education, is now critically important.

As information becomes the new medium of value and worth, those without a solid **foundation of learning** and the ability to learn will miss out on the basic ability to support themselves and take care of their families. — *Louise Behiel, Canadian Mental Health*

A Message from the President

Our theme this year is, appropriately enough, **Foundational Learning**. But how do we approach this topic? What are the cornerstones of adult learning? Are the foundations to adult learning a function of attitude, ability or opportunity?

As a board member and Chair it has seemed curious to me that while foundational learning characterizes the *raison d'être* of Calgary Learns – *Adult lifelong learning, a foundation for life* – we as an organization have found it a challenge to articulate what this actually means to us as individuals and as a community. One reason for this lack of clarity stems from the fact that it intuitively makes sense that foundational learning is both necessary and good – how can one bake a great cake without the basics of the recipe? In short, we tend to view foundational learning as the baking soda of education: it gives rise to everything else.

So, does it matter whether we hone our understanding of foundational learning? Calgary Learns has benefited from the intelligence, skills, passion and dedication of past and present staff, volunteers, members and board members. Alberta Advanced Education and Technology has consistently expressed their pleasure with how this organization handles its fiduciary responsibilities, and the LOLA awards give the greatest tangible and often touching evidence as to the social good we are proud to be a part of. The problem, if that is the right word, is that the social challenges we face continue to develop and are put into greater relief as our city's economic prosperity grows. Simply being satisfied with the good we think we are doing cannot meet the challenges we know exist.

In response, the board of directors has been engaged in the larger questions of what *is* our mandate and how *can* we most effectively address it? This past year has seen much thought and debate among board members and has culminated in a decision to take action for the future. To that end, the board of directors is looking to lay the groundwork this coming year for an evidence-based model of understanding and implementation. This process will take the form of independent research into the nature and challenges of foundational learning, warehousing that intelligence for local program development, and drawing on that proven wisdom to advocate and inform our community and government.



This is an exciting time and one that will require vision, dedication and patience from all stakeholders. Thank you for celebrating our successes today and I hope you will stand with us as we prepare for our future: the strength and integrity of our community resides in our ability to lift those who have fallen behind to heights beyond their means.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Don Poirier". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Don Poirier , Board President

A Message from the Executive Director

Foundation = n. the solid ground or base from which a building is built up

Recent news reports and studies indicate that Calgary has the highest education rates in the country. While this no doubt instills a sense of civic pride, those of us working in the field of adult foundational learning know that our work is far from over. In fact, now more than ever, we cannot afford to become complacent. While highly skilled and highly educated people are flocking to the city and prospering, the quality of life of our most vulnerable citizens seems to be slipping.

If the hot economy isn't improving the lives of marginalized populations, what would? Learning and specifically foundational learning has been shown to improve employment opportunities, income, health, civic participation and literacy levels of adults and their families and furthermore to decrease recidivism. These factors are all significant contributors to quality of life. If foundational learning can make such a defining impact, why isn't it receiving more attention, more funding and more public support? Simply put, we think this issue needs champions, a public education campaign and a strong body of evidence behind it.

In 2006 we built our own foundations to become one such champion of adult foundational learning. Some of our accomplishments included changing our name, logo, website and developing key statements and a tagline to better communicate our message. Another source of pride was being part of the "A Learning Alberta" process to ensure that foundational learning became a priority area. Thanks to the dedication of many community service providers and the vision of Advanced Education, foundational learning became one of the three priority areas of the province's adult education system.

Calgary Learns was also able to capture examples of the difference that foundational learning makes in the lives of learners thanks to the support of member agencies that shared testimonials, invited us for program visits, attended community consultations and reported results. These stories are an essential piece of our campaign as we work to promote the value of foundational learning-please keep them coming!

As I wrap things up in early 2007 for a maternity leave, I would like to congratulate the members, staff, volunteers and Board for a wonderful 2006 and I wish everyone luck for 2007.



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Krista Poole".

Krista Poole, Executive Director



BOARD MEMBERS

Don Poirier - President
Bill Brandon - Vice President
Faisal Ali - Treasurer
Alexandra Brierley
Bretta Maloff
Cam Stewart
Delaine Johnson (Interim Member)
Dianne Luxton
Duna Bayley
Edel Benary
Linda Reinhardt



Our Board some Past and Present: (Clockwise) Alex Brierley, Bretta Maloff, Linda Reinhardt, Krista Poole, Bill Luxton, Cam Stewart, Faisal Ali, Don Poirier, Edel Benary, Dianne Luxton, (Centre) Duna Bayley

STAFF

Krista Poole - Executive Director
Jeannie Finch-Grants Coordinator
Clare Pludek-Accounting
Megan Williams- Communications Coordinator
Cindy Storozinski - Interim Executive Director 2007

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2006

Calgary Learns

- We started the year off with a new name and logo.
- Launched our new website.
- Introduced the Latest in Learning: a monthly update into what's going on in the adult learning community.



We are proud of our new logo

Initiative Funding

- In 2006 we granted \$75,380 in total Initiative Funding.
- This funding supported the innovative work of eight local agencies.

A discussion around the latest and greatest in Initiative Funding



AGM and Life of Learning Awards (LOLAs)

- The AGM was held in April, a chance to welcome our new Board, bid a fond farewell to departing members and a chance for member agencies to vote on business.
- Our LOLA awards honor outstanding achievement in the adult learning community.
- We awarded 3 LOLAs. Congrats to:
 - Dee-Ann Mercer Individual Learner
 - Jennifer Lippold Instructor/Facilitator
 - Laureen Mackenzie Designer/Director

LOLA winner Dee-Ann Mercer displays her award, her learner story touched the crowd



Community Consultations

- Consultations helped shape future funding and agency priorities.
- The consultations involved a total of 52 attendees from 36 organizations.
- 3 consultations were held and featured presentations from:

Literacy and ESL Janet Lane, Executive Director of Literacy Alberta presented the IALSS results.

Employment Enhancement Lorene Anderson reviewed the Essential Skills Framework and its integration into adult learning.

Community Issues Merrill Cooper, a Calgary-based consultant examined current demographic trends in Calgary and the implications for learning and civic engagement.



Janet Lane, Literacy AB presented the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS)

The 2006 Community Development Conference

- Two members of the staff were on the organizing committee
- The Conference had over 150 community development professionals attend
- Highlights included keynote speakers Jim Diers, Tina Lopes and Bev Latter.
- The Conference also featured First Nations drumming, hoop dancing and a presentation on the Calling Home Ceremony; a spiritual journey to Belgium to honor veterans.

Dallas Arcand wowed the crowd with his hoop dancing



Champions of Learning the theme for the Resource Fair

International Adult Learners Week (IALW)

- Calgary Learns partnered with Literacy Alberta, the Community Learning Network and the Calgary Public Library to organize the IALW Resource Fair.
- 21 agencies participated in the Fair.
 - The goal of the Resource Fair was to raise public awareness about the wonderful programs going on in Calgary that support lifelong learning.

Program Funding

- In 2006 we granted \$768,481 in total program funding.
- Funding supported the work of 19 Calgary agencies.

Learners hard at work at the Calgary Immigrant Women's Association



Holiday Networking Event

- Conversation Cafés – A chance to learn about funded initiative projects.
- Network & Nibble - Catch up with friends.
- We collected donations for the Elizabeth Fry Society Holiday Wish List.
- First Nations drumming with Adrian Goulet & hoop dancing with Dallas Arcand



Adrian Goulet, Black Powder Teachings



Julia Atkinson with the E-Fry display an organization which offers pathways to healing for women involved in the criminal justice system.

Supporting Foundational Learning in the Community Grants 2006

Calgary Learns funding is made possible by a grant from Alberta Advanced Education's Community Adult Learning Program. As one of the province's 83 Community Adult Learning Councils that support and offer a range of community-based learning opportunities, the province of Alberta mandates Calgary Learns to support foundational learning in four areas: Adult Basic Literacy, English as a Second Language, Employment Enhancement and Community Issues.

In 2006 Calgary Learns instituted its first renewable three-year funding stream with six programs (identified below). Follow-up from a previous three-year funding pilot showed that multi-year grants help provide program stability, attract and retain staff and simplify grant administration.

Summary of 2006 Funding

Program Funding – Adult Basic Literacy

Bow Valley College	Evening Adult Basic Education	\$22,602
Bow Valley College	Lifeline to Literacy	\$14,973
Bow Valley College	Speech Assisted Reading and Writing	\$16,783
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association	Pebbles in the Sand*	\$41,200
Calgary John Howard Society	Learning Opportunities Program	\$15,000
Further Education Society of Alberta	Family Literacy ESL Program*	\$44,296
Mount Royal College	Transitional Vocational Program*	\$31,200
University of Calgary, Community Services Centre	Learning to Learn	\$5,987
	Total Adult Basic Literacy	\$192,041

Program Funding – English as a Second Language

Bow Valley College	Computer Enhanced ESL Literacy	\$27,010
Bow Valley College	ESL Volunteer Tutor Program	\$19,810
Calgary Chinese Community Service Association	Stepping Stones: Forward into Community	\$44,030
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association	Canadian Pronunciation*	\$5,150
YWCA of Calgary	English for New Canadians	\$94,000
	Total English as a Second Language	\$190,000

Program Funding – Employment Enhancement

Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	Computer Training for Employment	\$31,200
Calgary Immigrant Educational Society	Computer Combo Program	\$31,200
Calgary John Howard Society	Learning Employment Enhancement Program (LEEP)	\$42,230
Elizabeth Fry Society	Bridges Program*	\$25,570
Momentum (formerly MCC employment dev.)	ABCs of Small Business*	\$46,800
Momentum	Trades Success	\$13,000
	Total Employment Enhancement	\$190,000



Program Funding – Community Issues

Inside Out Theatre	Inside Out Integrated Theatre	\$12,984
Calgary Immigrant Aid Society	Citizenship Learning Project	\$18,801
Centre for Newcomers (formerly CMCN)	Multicultural Family Development Program	\$35,902
Calgary SCOPE Society	Integrated Community Kitchen	\$3,692
Canadian Mental Health Association	Family & Peer Support Workshops	\$18,588
Canadian Mental Health Association	Peer Options Workshops	\$17,576
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services	Family-focused Sign Language Instruction	\$9,934
Families Matter Association	Community-Based Family Education	\$78,963
	Total Community Issues	\$196,440

Total Program Funding **\$768,481**

* Programs in the 2006 – 2008 three-year funding stream.

Initiative Funding (one-time projects, maximum \$10,000)

Inside Out Theatre	A Second Look at Summer - Workshop Series	\$4,253
Bow Valley College	Literacy Survey of Disability Serving Agencies	\$9,005
Bow Valley College	Volunteer ESL Tutor Website Design	\$10,000
Calgary Workers' Resource Centre	Translating Employment Law into Plain Language	\$10,000
Canadian Mental Health Association	Support for Parents of Mentally Ill Children	\$10,000
Ethno-Cultural Council of Calgary	Voter Education for Immigrants and Newcomers	\$6,828
Momentum	CLICK Program**	\$12,000
MS Society of Canada	Self-Advocacy Program – Plain language materials	\$9,634
The Mustard Seed Street Ministry	Sampling Storefront 101/Writers' Workshop	\$3,660

Total Initiative Funding **\$75,380**

** Funding for Momentum's CLICK Program was made possible through funding returned late in the year by another agency. The \$10,000 maximum was waived in this special circumstance.

Initiative Funding: A Snapshot

Each year, Calgary Learns allocates about \$60,000 in Initiative funding to address new and emerging needs in adult learning. While the funding is limited, we have seen some exciting results in these projects and are proud to give organizations the opportunity to pilot new projects and learn new things. These Initiative projects help Calgary Learns realize our vision of creating an equitable community where adult learners can fully participate with enhanced confidence and capacity. Calgary Learns looks for innovative projects that address current learning needs in the community and that take place within a twelve-month period. Proposed projects should incorporate a holistic, learner-centered approach to teaching adults and be structured in a way that accommodates learner diversity and builds learners self-esteem and self-advocacy skills. The following are two examples of some of the incredible Initiative projects that Calgary Learns supported over the past year.

Electronic Commerce & Internet Business Program

The Electronic Commerce & Internet Business Program was offered by Momentum, an agency formerly known as MCC employment development. The agency felt that an Internet based business course would meet the needs of participants with employment and access barriers. The opportunity for people to work on-line offers flexibility, convenience and the ability to earn supplemental income. This would allow participants with mobility issues, childcare commitments, and those who prefer to work from home the opportunity to learn about on-line business.

The course taught Internet basics and provided participants with an overview of website layout and design. According to program organizers, *Electronic Commerce and Internet* also helps those looking to start an on-line business. The participants were able to determine the feasibility of their business idea, develop an Internet business plan and explore how to advertise websites and direct web traffic to their site. The course also helps participants distinguish between legitimate opportunities and scams. An essential part of the learning in this course is to help participants manage their expectations and understand that to

Project Update

- 2006 brought 2 course offerings with 18 graduates.
- Renamed *eVentures*, the next class is scheduled for April 2007.
- Due to the rapidly changing world of e-commerce, program organizers conduct research prior to each course to ensure that each offering of *eVentures* and the course content are updated accordingly so that information is both timely and relevant to learner needs.

build a successful on-line business you need good marketing, a high level of responsiveness and customer service as well as attention to detail and design. Program organizers also stress that managing a successful on-line operation takes just as much work as a running a traditional bricks and mortar business. An Internet business presents its own unique set of challenges and problems; however, it can also be very rewarding.



The Momentum Staff

Lastenia Narvaez, N.D enlisted the help of Momentum when she realized she needed some strategies around self employment. She enrolled in the *Electronic Commerce & Internet Business Program* to develop skills to run her business on-line. Lastenia has twenty years of experience as a physician in Venezuela and studied natural medicine first in Cuba and then in Canada. She is now a certified Naturopathic Doctor focusing on preventative medicine and health maintenance. Lastenia has found the website to be an excellent way to market her

services and recruit new clients. According to Lastenia, at Momentum she “obtained the tools to start e-commerce” and the skills to market her business on-line. Her biggest challenge is finding the time to develop the site. She added that this program needs a part II where participants can learn more about website design and management. Program organizers agree and would like to incorporate a course to teach the technical aspects of website design and maintenance. Perhaps we see a future Initiative project in the works!

For more information on Momentum visit them on-line at <http://www.momentum.org> or call 272-9323.

Stepping Stones: Forward into the Community

To illustrate the diversity and variety of Initiatives, the next example is the English as a Second Language program *Stepping Stones: Forward into the Community*. Hosted by the Calgary Chinese Community Services Association (CCCSA), *Stepping Stones*' main goal was to provide accessible basic English language training and literacy skills for Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin) and Sudanese (Nuer) learners who had not been successful in other ESL programs. The project targeted multi-



Chinese students at the Chinese Multi Cultural Centre.

barriered literacy learners with a specific focus on those with limited or no formal schooling in their country of origin. These were homebound parents, unemployed individuals, seniors and/or newcomers to Canada. This project implemented an innovative approach to instruction, using a bilingual facilitator under the supervision of a qualified ESL instructor who leads the class. According to former *Stepping Stones* instructor Amber Sun, bilingual instruction reduces student anxiety and defensiveness in language acquisition when learners can ask questions in their first language.

Participants worked on basic language and pronunciation with the goal of becoming proficient enough to master everyday tasks like ordering at a restaurant or navigating the transit system.

Students stated that in a bilingual learning environment they felt relaxed and comfortable to learn and ask questions. The class content was learner driven with students and the instructor working on topics relevant to the learners' everyday life.

Following this successful initiative grant, Calgary Learns was pleased to be able to provide Program funding for *Stepping Stones* in 2006, which opened the door to ongoing funding support. The program has met with great success, and surmounted some incredible challenges. Although the principles of bilingual instruction can be applied across cultures, the logistics and cultural dynamics vary sharply; so creativity, flexibility, reflection and strategic reassessment are an integral part of the program. We look forward to seeing the path this program takes and the new ways it finds to connect with learners in the multi-cultural community.

Do you have a potential Initiative project in the works? Are you interested in seeing if your idea might qualify for Calgary Learns Initiative funding? If so, please visit our website at www.calgarylearns.com or call Jeannie Finch, Grants Coordinator at 215-1430.

Project Update

- In addition to the Chinese classes, *Stepping Stones* is currently running classes for the Afghani community at the Aga Khan Shia Imami Ismaili Council for the Prairies.
- The *Stepping Stones* model and the classes are popular with the Afghani community, thanks to advertising through Aga Khan and good word of mouth.
- According to the program coordinator the Ismaili community may one day have the capacity and resources to run this program on their own.



Afghani Learners at the Aga Khan Shia Imami Ismaili Council for the Prairies.

A Message from the Treasurer

As Treasurer of the Calgary Learns Board for 2006, it is my pleasure to present the 2006 audited financial statements. The work of the finance committee would not have been as successful without the support of Executive Director Krista Poole, and her dedicated team at Calgary Learns. I would also like to acknowledge the support and guidance of Cam Stewart from the Finance Committee and Don Poirier, Board Chair, and past Treasurer. The Finance Committee works to continuously ensure that all financial reporting is thorough and transparent. This year, we adopted a policy of quarterly financial updates to the Board which allowed members to more succinctly track revenue and expenses.

The role of the Finance Committee is of growing importance for non-profits. This committee has to ensure that funders, members, the Board, and staff of the organization have confidence in the financial management of Calgary Learns. Fortunately for us, Calgary Learns policies and procedures help to ensure the smooth operation of the organization, and I would encourage members to contact myself, the Finance Committee or the Calgary Learns office with any questions on the agency's financial reporting. In 2007, our Finance Committee is looking forward to continually reviewing the financial policies of Calgary Learns so that we are true leaders in fiscal non-profit openness and management.



Faisal Ali, Board Treasurer



*Calgary Learns Board & Staff (Left to Right):
Krista Poole, Faisal Ali, Bretta Maloff, Jeannie
Finch, Edel Benary, Megan Williams, & Clare
Pludek.*

Summary of Financial Statement

Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2006



	2006	2005
Assets		
Current Assets	430,381	381,268
Capital Assets	6,803	7,127
Total Assets	437,184	388,395
Liabilities	222,001	213,177
Deferred Contributions	57,747	10,800
Fund Balances	157,436	164,418
	437,184	388,395
Statement of Operations December 31, 2006		
Revenue		
Advanced Ed. Community Programs	1,052,532	1,001,486
Other Income	62,835	84,161
Total Revenue	1,115,367	1,085,647
Disbursements		
Program Funding	768,481	749,301
Initiative Projects	75,380	66,910
General & Administrative	273,250	249,323
Amortization	5,238	3,672
Total Disbursements	1,122,349	1,069,206
Excess (deficiency) of receipts over disbursements	(6,982)	16,441

A copy of the complete 2006 auditor's report is available through the Calgary Learns office.



2006 Membership

Agape Language Centre
Alberta Network of Immigrant Women
Ali, Faisal
Aspen Family & Community Network Society
The Association of the Inside Out Integrated Theatre Projects
Bayley, Duna
Benary, Edel
Bow Valley College
Brandon, Bill
Brierley, Alexandra
Calgary Alternative Support Services
Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
Calgary Chinese Community Service Association
Calgary Immigrant Aid Society
Calgary Immigrant Educational Society
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
Calgary John Howard Society
Calgary Learning Centre
Centre for Newcomers
Calgary Public Library
Calgary Scope Society
Calgary Seniors' Resource Society
Calgary Worker's Resource Centre
Canadian Mental Health Association
Canadian Red Cross Society
Champions Career Centre
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
Dodge, Karen
Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary
Epilepsy Association of Calgary
Ethno-Cultural Council
Families Matter Society
Further Education Society of Alberta
Jewish Family Service Calgary
Johnson, Delaine
Literacy Alberta
Luxton, Bill
Luxton, Dianne
Maloff, Bretta
Momentum
Mount Royal College, Faculty of Continuing Education and Extension

Peer Support Services for Abused Women
Poirier, Don
Pringle, Janet
Rehabilitation Society of Calgary
Reinhardt, Linda
Schizophrenia Society of Alberta
Stewart, Cameron
Sunrise Community Link Resource Centre Society
Taylor-Cole, Wilfred
The CHEERS Society
The Mustard Seed
University of Calgary - Community Services Centre
YMCA Calgary
YWCA of Calgary





200, 301—14th Street NW

Calgary, Alberta T2N 2A1

Phone: (403) 266-6444

Fax: (403) 266-6449

E-mail: info@calgarylearns.com

Website: www.calgarylearns.com

