



Learning Matters

**Annual Report
2007**



Although the majority of Canadians have adequate literacy skills, too many simply don't. This situation is not just unacceptable, it is critical in light of the evolving structure of the economy. We need public policies and business initiatives to address this issue. Improving literacy can have dramatic and far reaching effects. It can boost the economic and financial success of individuals and improve the economy as a whole. It can reduce poverty, improve health, lift community engagement and lead to a higher standard of living. In fact, it is hard to identify any other single issue that can have such a large payoff to individuals, the economy and society.

Craig Alexander
Vice President & Deputy Chief Economist
TD Bank Financial

Through literacy you can begin to see the universe. Through learning you can reach anybody as long as you have the courage to pursue everything that you have planned.

Christine F Suela
Coordinator Hands On Computer Program
Calgary Catholic Immigration Society

Learning and literacy matter because they enable a whole world to open up - a world of information and knowledge. These tools contribute to an individual's ability to achieve mental and emotional wellness.

Katie Ayres
Director, Community Supports
Canadian Mental Health Association - Calgary Region

Life affords us never-ending opportunities to engage with our world, to learn and find new ways to understand the magnificent universe.

David Finch
Author/Historian



Board of Directors

Edel Benary—President

**Alexandra Brierley—Vice
President**

Faisal Ali—Treasurer

Cam Stewart

Connie Ho

Delaine Johnson

Dianne Luxton

Karen Dodge

Louise Behiel

Trudy Mason



Staff

**Cindy Storozinski—Interim
Executive Director**

Krista Poole— Executive Director

Jeannie Finch—Grants Coordinator

Clare Pludek—Accounting

**Megan Williams—
Communications Coordinator**



A Message from the President

Appropriately, our theme this year is *Learning Matters*. Why is that appropriate? Several thoughts come to mind as I reflect on the Calgary environment today.

Experiencing explosive growth, the resources of the city are stretched to maximum capacity and yet the city continues to attract newcomers from all over the world. Even with the influx of human resources, unemployment is at an all time low. Homelessness is at an all time high, so much so that the Calgary Committee to End Homelessness was struck early in 2007 and delivered its report, *Calgary's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness* early in 2008. According to the hierarchy of needs, shelter is a physiological need – without shelter many of the other basic needs of an individual or family will go unmet, including security of body, of employment, of resources, of morality, of the family, of health and of prosperity – all still basic needs. The report tells us that:

- Housing alone won't end homelessness and we will need to address the root causes including poverty, addictions, mental illness and domestic violence. (P. 7)
- We will also work to rapidly link people with employment opportunities and skills training. (Strategy 1 Goal 2 p. 25)
- A well educated, well trained and adequately funded non-profit sector is central to the success of our 10 Year Plan. (Principle 12 p. 9)



E Benary

Edel Benary, Board President

So how does learning matter? Learning is a tool that can assist in addressing poverty, and that supports the goals of *Calgary's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness*.* Calgary Learns funds learning opportunities that support the goals of the plan and meet the needs of the adult learning community through four programming areas: Basic Adult Literacy, English as an Additional Language, Community Issues and Employment Enhancement. The programs funded meet identified needs of small groups of learners in their communities, in settings that facilitate attendance and optimize the learning opportunity for the learners. These programs are successful in improving the basic needs of the individual or family in that they improve employment opportunities, thus increasing resources and financial security, and leading to prosperity and often improved health.

Learning addresses two other levels in the hierarchy of needs: esteem and self-actualization. Learning increases an individual's self-esteem, it builds confidence, it leads to achievement and it leads to respect of others and by others. Learning enables making the most of one's abilities and optimizing one's potential. So, learning does matter!

On a personal note, over the past year, I was given the tremendous opportunity to participate in the Calgary Learns *Learning Matters* ongoing research project. Being able to witness first-hand the success of programs funded by Calgary Learns, and the success and confidence of learners is amazing! The stories speak for themselves and I would encourage each of you to read them. For me personally, this experience was one of the highlights of my term! I invite you to use our research, use the stories, use the bibliography and tell others about it. It's posted on our website www.calgarylearns.com for everyone, and I hope you will find it an inspiring and valuable resource that truly highlights why learning matters.

*Raising a country's literacy scores by 1% relative to the international average is associated with a 1.5% increase in per capita GDP. *Public Investment in Skills: Are Canadian Governments Doing Enough?* C.D. Howe Institute October 2005

A Message from the Executive Director

When I look back on this year it seems very fitting that our theme is Learning Matters. It stems from a study we commissioned in 2007 that provided a snap shot of the value of adult learning. This theme also reflects what I learned in my year at Calgary Learns.

When I took on the role of Interim Executive Director I felt that it would be relatively straightforward. What I wasn't aware of and am very pleased to have gained was a far deeper understanding of the complexity of the issues surrounding literacy and the work that you are all doing.

This year we participated in various discussions which stem from the Ministry of Alberta Advanced Education and Technologies (AAET) unveiling of the *Roles and Mandates Policy Framework for Alberta's Publicly Funded Advanced Education System*. The Vision of this framework recognizes that an educated society is vital to securing both economic prosperity and social well-being.

It is exciting to know that both the work of the Board with *Learning Matters* and the Ministry of AAET with the *Roles and Mandates Policy Framework* recognize and are working on capturing the importance of learning while looking for innovative ways to be responsive to the ever changing community which we live in.

Lifelong learning is essential as we face the challenges of increased globalization and rapid advancements in new technologies. It is critical to provide learners not only with the reading, writing and numerical skills but also with the ability to comprehend, compute and convey this information. With our city's growing immigrant and aboriginal populations it is imperative that we continue to look at more effective ways to include all learners and deal with the barriers that are affecting their success.

My work at Calgary Learns has accentuated for me that literacy is at the heart of learning and literacy is an issue that affects us all. It is up to all of us to continue to look for ways to incorporate positive changes and enhance our future successes by promoting and advocating for literacy, not only in our own communities but in our nation.

On a personal note I would like to send a heartfelt thank you to all of you who I have had the pleasure of working with and getting to know over this past year. From the Board, Krista and staff to the CLN, AAET Community Programs Branch and all the committee members and agency staff I have had the pleasure of working with. Thanks to all of you for your support, laughter and friendship. It has been a great year for me. I would also like to congratulate Krista Poole on the birth of her daughter Eva and welcome her back. I wish you all continued success in the worthwhile work that you do.



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Cindy Storozinski".

Cindy Storozinski,
Interim Executive Director

Why Learning Matters

This past year saw the Calgary Learns Board commission *Learning Matters*, a discussion of issues related to foundational learning in Calgary, and a selection of agency, learner and volunteer stories. The report highlights the wonderful work being done in a cross section of our funded agencies including Momentum, Calgary Immigrant Services (formerly Calgary Immigrant Aid) and the Further Education Society of Calgary. It also profiles the Volunteer ESL Tutor Training Project, a unique collaboration between the Calgary Public Library, Bow Valley College and the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society. *Learning Matters* includes an annotated bibliography which provides a cross-section of recent studies, reports and publications related to foundational learning, life long learning and literacy. Although this work was supported by the entire Board the work was overseen by the Calgary Learns Research Committee.

The Calgary Learns Board hopes that *Learning Matters* captures the value of the learning opportunities created through funded programs and communicates to the public the excellent work being done by programs that receive Calgary Learns funding. The report also provides a new avenue for engaging the Board in the work being done at Calgary Learns. According to Board President Edel Benary, “being able to witness first-hand the success of programs funded by Calgary Learns, and the success and confidence of learners was amazing!”

In recent years part of the strategic plan for the Calgary Learns Board has been the promotion of foundational learning opportunities within the community. According to Cam Stewart, member of the Board Research Committee, this advocacy role is crucial to helping the community understand the value of foundational learning. He believes that, “foundational learning opportunities provide people with a steppingstone to more advanced learning and training opportunities. This, in turn, leads people to more stable, higher paying jobs and a heightened ability to create a future with hope.”

The Calgary Learns Board hopes to continue to be involved in the promotion of funded programs and to conduct a more in depth study and environmental scan of the Calgary foundational learning community. Board members continue down the path as advocates and supporters of foundational learning, as it is the passion and desire to promote learning and literacy that attracts community members to the Calgary Learns Board, a group of people who truly believe that learning matters.



Learning Matters author Fran Kimmel with Cindy Storozinski and Edel Benary at the launch for *The Volunteer ESL Tutor Training* website: **Check it out at www.vesl.ca**



Cam Stewart advocating for why Learning Matters

Visit our website for a copy of *Learning Matters*

www.calgarylearns.com

YWCA of Calgary: A Tradition of Providing English for New Canadians

English for New Canadians is a Calgary Learns funded program. It provides instruction in practical English communication, literacy and language skills. The program is offered through the YWCA of Calgary and locations include the YWCA downtown and 12 outreach locations including branches of the Calgary Public Library and Calgary Jewish Family Services (CJFS) Seniors Residence. At the YWCA location, daytime and evening classes are provided in specific language skills: Reading & Writing, Social Conversation, Communications Skills, Pronunciation & Fluency and Workplace English. The classes at library branches provide learners the opportunity to attend daytime, evening and weekend classes at their local library and focus on general ESL. Courses offered at the CJFS focus on providing seniors with basic ESL communication skills.



Students in the Level 1 Reading and Writing class with instructor Gordon

The YWCA has been offering English classes for new immigrants since 1911 and they continue to build on their tradition of providing quality English as Second Language (ESL) training. According to program manager Linda Rayner, English for New Canadians strives to provide a “holistic approach to learning, language acquisition and developing cultural understanding”. Rayner stresses that ESL is only one component of the learning involved when students come to the YWCA. Equally important is learning how to successfully integrate into Canadian culture and understand cultural differences around behavior and personal appearance, among other things. Rayner adds that a large part of the program’s success is due to the quality of instructors. When hiring instructors she looks for individuals who have had experience living abroad so that they can better relate to the cultural adaptation students experience when coming to Canada.

Glaide Benjamin has been an ESL instructor for 17 years and has taught students at all levels. She notes that what is most rewarding about being an instructor is to see the development of learners as they become more comfortable with their language acquisition, and how this translates into greater confidence in using English in their daily lives. Classroom activities include encouraging students to do paired or group activities so that they build on each other’s skills and get to know each other. Classes often go on field trips - including visiting city hall and going to the police museum. However Benjamin notes her biggest challenge is getting students to do their homework.



Elfy & Glaide at the YWCA

Course participant Elfy Dajaro came to the YWCA due to their reputation for providing quality ESL classes. Elfy - a doctor in her homeland of Columbia - finds the course very helpful as learning English is a necessity for building a career in Canada. She enjoys the interactive component of the class and the opportunity to review her course work and develop her reading skills.

The YWCA will continue to work on providing quality classes and look to develop programs that are responsive to the needs of students and collaborate with other agencies to reach as many learners as possible. As Rayner noted, “We can no longer afford to operate in a silo”. The way to move our programs and services into the future is to collaborate and develop curriculum that meets the needs of the learners.” With such a responsive attitude and excellent reputation it will be no surprise to see the YWCA serving Calgary’s learners 100 years from now.



Supporting Foundational Learning in the Community Grants 2007

Calgary Learns funding is made possible by a grant from Alberta Advanced Education and Technology. As the largest of Alberta's 83 Community Adult Learning Councils, we support a range of foundational learning opportunities in four program areas: Adult Basic Literacy, English as a Second Language, Employability Enhancement and Community Issues. We provide two types of funding, Program and Initiative. Here is the full slate of 2007 grants. For descriptions of these grants please see the funding section of our website www.calgarylearns.com.

Program Funding is renewable annual and three-year funding to deliver programs to support foundational learning. Learning opportunities must be non-credit and part-time.

Program Funding – Adult Basic Literacy

Bow Valley College	Evening Adult Basic Literacy Classes, Academic Foundations*	\$26,806
Bow Valley College	Lifeline to Literacy*	\$16,046
Bow Valley College	Speech-Assisted Reading and Writing*	\$20,110
Calgary Immigrant Women's Assn	Pebbles in the Sand*	\$47,200
Calgary John Howard Society	Learning Opportunities Program	\$15,900
Further Education Society of AB	Family Literacy ESL Program*	\$50,540
Mount Royal College	Transitional Vocational Program*	\$32,448
Total Adult Basic Literacy		\$209,050

Program Funding – English as a Second Language

Bow Valley College	Computer Enhanced ESL Literacy*	\$28,630
Bow Valley College	ESL Volunteer Tutor Program*	\$21,000
Bow Valley College	Volunteer ESL Tutor Training*	\$15,870
Calgary Chinese Community Service Association	Stepping Stones: Forward into Community	\$35,000
Calgary Immigrant Women's Assn	Canadian Pronunciation*	\$5,305
YWCA of Calgary	English for New Canadians*	\$99,640
Total English as a Second Language		\$205,445

Program Funding – Employability Enhancement

Calgary Catholic Immigration Soc.	Computer Training for Employment	\$33,200
Calgary Drop-In Centre Society	Career Training Initiative	\$26,584
Calgary Immigrant Educational Society	Computer Combo Program	\$31,200
Calgary John Howard Society	Learning Employment Enhancement Pgm	\$48,597
Elizabeth Fry Society	Bridges Program*	\$26,330
Momentum	ABC's of Small Business*	\$48,672
Total Employability Enhancement		\$214,583

Program Funding – Community Issues

Association of the Inside Out Integrated Theatre Project	Inside Out Integrated Theatre	\$12,984
Calgary Immigrant Aid Society	Citizenship Learning Project	\$18,809
Calgary SCOPE Society	Integrated Community Kitchen	\$3,692
Canadian Mental Health Assn	Family Peer Support Workshops	\$25,443
Canadian Mental Health Assn	Peer Options Workshops	\$18,631
Centre for Newcomers	Multicultural Family Development Program	\$38,056
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services	Family-focused Sign Language Instruction	\$11,530
Families Matter Society	Community-Based Family Education	\$83,565
Total Community Issues		\$212,710

Total Program Funding \$841,788

* Indicates programs receiving three-year funding. In 2007 Calgary Learns offered its second stream of three-year funding, expanding the number of multi-year funding to eleven programs.

Initiative Funding is one-time project funding up to \$10,000 to research, develop and/or pilot innovative non-credit learning opportunities for adult foundational learners.

Association of the Inside Out Integrated Theatre Project	Building Blocks to Communication Workshop Series	\$6,360
Bow Valley College	Connecting Learning to Work: Career Development	\$10,000
Calgary Immigrant Educational Society	Personal Hygiene and the Use of Modern Facilities	\$9,181
Calgary John Howard Society	Caring for Families	\$10,000
Families Matter Society	Community-based Family Life Ed: Story-telling Initiative	\$10,000
Further Education Society of AB	Dads, Learning and Literacy: Encouraging Male Participation in Family Literacy Initiatives	\$9,900
The Women's Centre of Calgary	Connections: A Conference for Women	\$9,775

Total Initiative Funding \$65,216

Total 2007 Funding \$907,004



**Summary of Financial Statement
December 31, 2007**

	2007	2006
Assets		
Current Assets	479,693	430,381
Long Term Assets	21,087	0
Capital Assets	1,638	6,803
Total Assets	502,418	437,184
Liabilities	238,015	222,001
Deferred Contributions	104,830	57,747
Fund Balances	159,573	157,436
	502,418	437,184
Statement of Operations December 31, 2007		
Revenue		
Advanced Ed. Community Programs	1,125,270	1,052,532
Other Income	75,434	62,835
Total Revenue	1,200,704	1,115,367
Disbursements		
Program Funding	841,788	768,481
Initiative Projects	65,216	75,380
General & Administrative	286,398	273,250
Amortization	5,165	5,238
Total Disbursements	1,198,567	1,122,349
Excess (deficiency) of receipts over disbursements	2,137	(6,982)

A copy of the complete 2007 auditor's report is available through the Calgary Learns office.



2007 Membership

Alberta Network of Immigrant Women
Ali, Faisal
African Sudanese Association of Calgary
Association of the Inside Out Theatre Project
Behiel, Louise
Benary, Edel
Bow Valley College
Brierley, Alexandra
Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
Calgary Chinese Community Service Association
Calgary Health Region
Calgary Immigrant Aid Society
Calgary Immigrant Educational Society
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
Calgary John Howard Society
Calgary Learning Centre
Calgary Drop-In Rehab Centre
Centre for Newcomers
Calgary Public Library
Calgary Scope Society
Calgary Workers Resource Centre
Canadian Mental Health Association
Canadian Red Cross Society
Centre for Suicide Prevention
Columbia College
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre of Calgary
Dodge, Karen
Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary
Epilepsy Association of Calgary
Ethno-Cultural Council
Families Matter Society
Further Education Society of Alberta
Ho, Connie
Jewish Family Service Calgary
Johnson, Delaine
Literacy Alberta
Luxton, Dianne
Maloff, Bretta
Mason, Trudy
Momentum
Mount Royal College, Faculty of Continuing Education and Extension
Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada- Calgary Chapter
The Mustard Seed
Peer Support Services for Abused Women
Poirier, Don
Stewart, Cameron
Women's Centre of Calgary
Women's Health Resources
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