

Inspiring Learning

Annual Report
2008



Inspiring Learning in Alberta



“The basic building blocks of all learning are reading and writing, numeracy, and oral communication skills. By working in partnership with Advanced Education and Technology, Calgary Learns provides a way for the Government of Alberta to reach out with opportunities that meets the needs of adults across Calgary. With these skills, adults have the potential to reach their personal goals and realize their dreams.” ~ Doug Horner, Minister of Advanced Education and Technology

A Message From The Board President & Executive Director

"The mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be kindled" ~ Plutarch

Just how many learning fires did our community kindle in 2008? Surely, the number is immeasurable. And how many times did we feel the warmth of that fire ourselves, inspired by the persistence, accomplishments and bravery of learners, or those moments when we learned something new and exciting ourselves?

Our theme for this year "Inspiring Learning" has a dual meaning. As members of the foundational learning community, our role is to "inspire learning", but an equally important, sometimes forgotten role, is to be "inspired by learning". You have shown us so clearly what happens when you are inspired: new research, new learning tools, creative ways to overcome barriers, new ways of reaching out; and an undying commitment to the success of learners, colleagues and the foundational learning community.

In 2008 we continued our own search for new and better ways to support and celebrate adult learning and learners. Alongside a successful annual cycle of activities are several highlights: Craig Alexander, author of *Literacy Matters: a Call for Action*, spoke at our AGM/LOLAs on the state of literacy in Canada. We also took part in *Connecting the Dots*, a national research initiative on the mutual accountability shared by funders and literacy providers. Literacy Advocate, MLA Mr. Manmeet Bhullar joined us for a spirited roundtable discussion on foundational learning in Calgary. And finally, Calgary Learns members participated in the Community of Practice Summit to learn how to facilitate high level knowledge exchange, which led to the formation of learning groups in facilitation, human resources, literacy and research.



Calgary Learns, as an organization, takes learning seriously as it looks to improve itself and its impact on the community. In the fall, the Board of Directors and staff joined in a day-long retreat and developed strategic goals for 2008-2010. They are:

- Focus on foundational learning: support learners through relevant and effective programs.
- Increase awareness and demonstrate the impact of foundational learning in the Community.
- Create a Centre of Collaboration and Hub of Capacity Building
- Create sustainability to carry on Calgary Learns mission and vision

These goals help both the staff and board to focus on what is most important as we move ahead to enabling your good work. Our deepest thanks go out to the inspiring learners, members, staff, Board and volunteers of Calgary Learns. All of your activity breathes life (inspiration!) into this vibrant learning community.

Krista Poole
Executive Director

Cam Stewart
Board President



Membership 2008

“We will be pleased to become a member organization and thank you for considering us to be part of your network. Calgary Learns appears to provide invaluable linkages and support for its groups so we feel fortunate to have made this connection.” ~ New Member

Alberta Network of Immigrant Women

Ali, Faisal

Association of Inside Out Theatre Project

Benary, Edel

Bredin Institute

Calgary Catholic Immigration Society

Calgary Health Region

Calgary Immigrant Women's Association

Calgary Learning Centre

Calgary Sexual Health Centre

Calgary Workers' Resource Centre

Centre for Newcomers

Cooperative ESL Ministries Society

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services

Elizabeth Fry Society

Families Matter Society

Immigrant Services Calgary

Luxton, Dianne

Mason, Trudy

Momentum

Multiple Sclerosis Society Calgary Chapter

Palamar, Cassie

Servants Anonymous Society of Calgary

Szasz-Redmond, Eva

The Vocational and Rehabilitation Institute

Youth in Motion

The Alberta Seventh Step Society

Anderson, Lorene

Behiel, Louise

Bow Valley College

Calgary Advanced Learning Centre

Calgary Chinese Community Service Assoc.

Calgary Immigrant Educational Society

Calgary John Howard Society

Calgary Public Library

Calgary Scope Society

Canadian Mental Health Association

Columbia Learning Society

Credit Counselling Services of Alberta

Dodge, Karen

Epilepsy Association of Calgary

Further Education Society of Alberta

Literacy Alberta

Making Changes Employment Association

Millican Ogden Community Association

Mount Royal College

Osenton, Celia

Peer Support Services for Abused Women

Solutions at Work

Stewart, Cameron

Women's Centre of Calgary

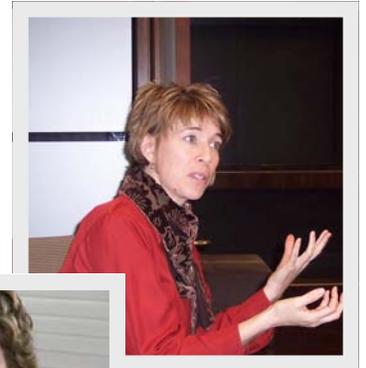
YWCA of Calgary

Staff & Board

“The dedication and hard work committed to Calgary Learns by board and staff is truly an inspiration to me. Our member agencies, their learners, and all Calgarians are the big beneficiaries.” ~ Cam Stewart

Board

Cam Stewart – President
Trudy Mason – Treasurer
Faisal Ali – Vice President
Edel Benary – Past President
Dianne Luxton
Louise Behiel
Eva Szasz-Redmond
Lorene Anderson
Celia Osenton
Cassie Palamar



Staff

Krista Poole – Executive Director
Jeannie Finch – Grants Coordinator
Megan Williams – Communications Coordinator
Clare Pludek – Accountant
Cindy Storozinski – Interim Executive Director



Inspiring

Calgary Learns is best known as a foundational learning funder, but we also have an important role as a **learning organization** rooted in action with a desire to innovate. In 2008 we found new ways to bring educators together to learn, share and participate in important research. We celebrated champions of learning, and worked diligently with policy-makers on behalf of learners. We are always looking for new ways to inspire and be inspired by learning in Calgary. Read on to learn more.....

Literacy Matters: Craig Alexander Literacy Champion

“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. 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, TD Bank

In 2008, our AGM keynote address was provided by Craig Alexander, Deputy Chief Economist, TD Bank Financial Group and author of *Literacy Matters: A Call for Action*. He outlined how improving literacy rates can have a dramatic effect on our society and economy. He linked low-literacy in adults to the mortgage crisis in the United States, poor health and poverty. Mr. Alexander confirmed just how important providing access to literacy and learning is for the health and viability of the entire community.

Empowering the Community: Manmeet Bhullar

Mr. Bhullar's visit provided the opportunity for us to advocate for the meaningful and purposeful investment of provincial government's funds in foundational learning. We also were able to present how well thought out projects can create a social change and provide huge return on investment. “ ~ Beba Svirg, Calgary Immigrant Women's Association (CIWA)

A highlight of 2008 was Manmeet Bhullar's visit to Calgary Learns where he led a round table discussion around issues facing literacy and learning professionals. Mr. Bhullar is an MLA for Calgary-Montrose and holds the important role of literacy advocate. Throughout his life he has led and participated in activities to help the community develop tools of empowerment including literacy and education. Calgary Learns was pleased to provide a forum for Mr. Bhullar and work with him to inspire leadership in learning.

Connecting the Dots: A Tool for Assessing Accountability

“Ultimately we aim to increase understanding among practitioners, policy makers, and funders about mutual accountability and options for improvement.” ~ Jeannie Finch, Calgary Learns

In 2008 Calgary Learns became involved in a nationally funded (OLES) project focusing on accountability in the literacy field. In partnership with two literacy programs we fund at Bow Valley College, we are creating an exciting new tool to assess our mutual accountability. We trust this tool will help funders and literacy providers to explore and assess their shared responsibility to each other, learners, and to the larger community. We will pilot the tool in spring 2009. The project team will then be available to share learnings and showcase the tool in professional development sessions. Calgary Learns looks forward to sharing the findings with the community.

Learning

Community Consultations: Shaping Our Priorities

“This was the first time that I had the opportunity to meet with the representatives from different agencies that receive funding from Calgary Learns. I was impressed by the variety of the programs that your organization funds. I found the event very informative with great opportunities for networking.” ~ **Consultation Attendee**

Each spring Calgary Learns invites our membership and strategic partners to a half-day consultation to share emerging themes, successes and challenges, sector news and the impact of all of these on the delivery of foundational learning programs. The consultations help to focus our funding priorities and activities for the upcoming year. Our consultation in 2008 provided invaluable feedback around the community’s need to share operational expertise and provide opportunities for shared training. Participants also identified that they would like Calgary Learns to act as a convener of adult learning forums and play a role in helping to raise the profile of different agencies in the community.



Holiday Networking: Bringing the Community Together

“Thanks to everyone at Calgary Learns for providing the opportunity to attend the December event. We did make some interesting contacts that we plan on following up with so it was certainly beneficial.” ~ **Networking Attendee**

A favorite annual event is our Holiday Networking where we bring the community together to celebrate the inspiring work being done in foundational learning. This year, 2007 Initiative project coordinators hosted tables and led a series of conversation cafés. Calgary Learns also used this event to promote Communities of Practice (CoPs) and facilitate the development of CoPs in the areas of foundational research, facilitation, literacy and training. The evening ended on a beautiful note, with our voices joined in song.



2008 Grants to Member Organizations

In 2008, Calgary Learns allocated nearly \$1million to foundational learning in Calgary. With this support, 23 of our member organizations provided a total of 20,775 hours of instruction to adult learners.

Our funding comes from an annual grant from Alberta Advanced Education and Technology. As the largest of Alberta's 81 Community Adult Learning Councils, Calgary Learns supports foundational learning in four program areas: Adult Basic Literacy, English Language Learning, Employability Enhancement and Community Issues.

The term *foundational learning* refers to the basic skills adults require to fully participate in life: the ability to participate as neighbours and citizens, have satisfying employment, and prepare to pursue further learning. Some adults recognize their foundational learning needs and actively seek ways to meet them. Other learners are reached through their special interests or compelling personal circumstances. Whatever the case, our grants support foundational learning in accessible locations, at convenient times and with affordable or free tuition.

Last year, Calgary Learns supported a wide variety of learning opportunities that effectively engage foundational learners and help them succeed in their goals. Our members showed exceptional flexibility and creativity in serving learners in 2008 and they were more successful than ever at demonstrating the impact of their efforts. We are proud to partner with our members to inspire learning.

PROGRAM funding provides renewable grants for ongoing programs that provide non-credit learning opportunities to adult foundational learners.

Program Grants – Adult Basic Literacy

Bow Valley College	Evening Adult Basic Literacy Classes, Academic Foundations	\$28,414
Bow Valley College	Lifeline to Literacy	\$16,046
Bow Valley College	Speech-Assisted Reading and Writing	\$21,670
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association	Pebbles in the Sand	\$48,600
Calgary John Howard Society	Learning Opportunities Program	\$15,900
Further Education Society of AB	Family Literacy Program	\$51,660
Mount Royal College	Transitional Vocational Program	\$33,746
Total Adult Basic Literacy		\$216,036

Program Grants – English Language Learning

Bow Valley College	Computer Enhanced ESL Literacy	\$30,348
Bow Valley College	ESL Volunteer Tutor Program	\$22,260
Bow Valley College	Volunteer ESL Tutor Training	\$18,688
Calgary Chinese Community Service Association	Stepping Stones: Forward into Community	\$63,106
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association	Canadian Pronunciation	\$5,464
YWCA of Calgary	English for New Canadians	\$105,618
Total English Language Learning		\$245,484

Program Grants – Employability Enhancement

Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	Computer Training for Employment	\$38,463
Calgary Immigrant Educational Society	Computer Combo Program	\$34,548
Calgary John Howard Society	Learning Employment Enhancement Program	\$53,375
Elizabeth Fry Society	Bridges Program	\$28,640
Momentum	ABC's of Small Business	\$50,169
Momentum	CLICK / Computer workshops	\$14,000
Total Employability Enhancement		\$219,195

Program Grants – Community Issues

Association of the Inside Out Integrated Theatre Project	Inside Out Integrated Theatre	\$15,750
Canadian Mental Health Association	Family Peer Support Workshops	\$26,970
Canadian Mental Health Association	Peer Options Workshops	\$19,750
Centre for Newcomers	Multicultural Family Development Program	\$40,340
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services	Family-Focused Sign Language Instruction	\$13,100
Families Matter Society	Community-Based Family Education	\$83,565
Immigrant Services Calgary	Citizenship Learning Project	\$20,525
Total Community Issues		\$220,000

Total Program Funding \$900,715

INITIATIVE funding provides one-time project grants to research, develop and pilot innovative non-credit learning opportunities for adult foundational learners.

Initiative Grants – maximum \$10,000

Bow Valley College	Effective Approaches for Deaf Immigrant Adults in Bicultural and Bilingual Education: Research Project: Phase II	\$10,000
Calgary Sexual Health Centre	Seniors "A Go Go"	\$10,000
Making Changes Employment	Taking Control: Immigrant Women on Assertiveness	\$10,000
Servants Anonymous Society	SAS Curriculum Development	\$10,000
Vocational and Rehabilitation Research Institute	Works Skills for Persons with Developmental Disabilities and What You Need to Know About Being a Plain Language Translator	\$10,000
Youth In Motion	Developing Workplace Essential Skills for New Immigrants	\$8,952
Calgary Public Library	Life Stories, Life Skills	\$9,662

Total Initiative Funding \$68,614

Total 2008 Funding \$969,329



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Auditors' Report On Summarized Financial Statements

**To the Members
Calgary Learns Association**

The accompanying summarized statements of financial position and revenue and expenditures are derived from the complete financial statements of Calgary Learns Association as at December 31, 2008 and for the year then ended on which we expressed an opinion without reservation in our report dated January 21, 2009. The fair summarization of the complete financial statements is the responsibility of management. Our responsibility, in accordance with the applicable Assurance Guideline of The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, is to report on the summarized financial statements.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements fairly summarize, in all material respects, the related complete financial statements in accordance with the criteria described in the Guideline referred to above.

These summarized financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. Readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes. For more information on the entity's financial position, revenue and expenditures and cash flows, reference should be made to the related complete financial statements.

BDO Dunwoody LLP
Chartered Accountants

Calgary, Alberta
January 21, 2009

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Summary Financial Statements December 31, 2008

	2008 (\$)	2007* (\$)
Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2008		
Assets		
Current Assets	423,031	500,780
Capital Assets	11,722	1,638
Total Assets	434,753	502,418
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Liabilities	15,117	14,047
Deferred Contributions	273,518	328,798
Fund Balances	146,118	159,573
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	434,753	502,418
Statement of Revenue and Expenditures For the year ended December 31, 2008		
Revenue		
Advanced Education Community Programs	1,178,482	1,112,197
Other Income	83,966	66,390
Total Revenue	1,262,448	1,178,587
Expenditures		
Program Funding	887,812	818,082
Initiative Projects	66,380	66,805
General & Administrative	314,212	286,398
Amortization	7,499	5,165
Total Expenditures	1,275,903	1,176,450
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	(13,455)	2,137

*2007 figures have been reclassified where necessary to conform with the 2008 presentation

A copy of the complete 2008 audited financial statements is available through the Calgary Learns office.



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