
ACTION READ

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

www.actionread.com

TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH LITERACY FOR 30 YEARS

Action Read Community Literacy Centre
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519-836-2759



MY JOURNEY

I have come so far, yet have so far to go
My pride and wisdom like a flower will grow
Inside me I know there is a great person, just waiting to be
Wanting out, wanting to be free
I know I can do it if someone will give me a chance
That person will have to care enough to look past my song and dance
To be part of your world, to see the light
To know the truth, to know what's right
So you see that is why I have a long way to go
And a lot of tears and smiles to try.

Wanda Meadus
Former Action Read Learner



Dear Friends,

Wanda Meadus describes literacy as a flower that grows with “a lot of tears and smiles”. For Action Read, 2016-2017 held plenty of both!

We saw 196 learners reach their goals - digging deep to find the courage, inspiration and strength to be successful. Our volunteers too found ways to transform a personal passion for learning, into literacy growth in others. They enrich the lives of our community through various acts of solidarity, kindness and support. We helped almost 240 children and their caregivers to develop stronger early literacy skills, striving at all times to make the program engaging and relevant. Further, the Board provided unwavering dedication and energy throughout the year, and were highly productive.

Of course, there were challenges too. In early 2017, Action Read learned that we had to move after 17 years at the Park Mall. A major flood two weeks before move-out day added to the stress. These and other challenges were overcome by the amazing commitment, creativity and flexibility of the Action Read Staff.

A popular motto at Action Read is Doris Middleton's words 'Bloom where you are planted', and so with every challenge comes growth and opportunity. We are making good friends at our new HOPE House location; we benefit from a street-level entrance with beautiful signage and much improved visibility; and we are reminded of how strong and amazing the Action Read community is.

As we move forward in 2017 and beyond, our garden continues to be nourished by a rich community of learners, volunteers, staff, funders and supporters. Action Read's roots go deeper, and our flowers grow stronger and more vibrant with every passing year.

Many thanks for your continued commitment to changing lives through literacy.

Mira Clarke
Executive Director

Jeff Guitard
Board Chair



Accomplishments

- Helped 94% of learners reach their goals
- Supported 15 learners to self-published books on such topics as poetry, mental health, history, fantasy & more
- Several learners spoke passionately on behalf of Action Read in the community. Three learners allowed their story to be filmed. One wrote and performed a song
- Ran workshops on therapy, learning disabilities, financial literacy, legal rights, mental health, and more
- Facilitated courses in Essentials Skills, employability, receptionist and cashier training, basic computers, soft skills and workplace numeracy
- Located, decorated & moved offices under very short timelines, with only a 1 day interruption in service delivery
- Served 196 learners, including 115 brand new. Provided support to 55 more community members
- Celebrated 30 years of service in 2017

Partnerships

- Hosted three University of Guelph student placements
- Celebrated International Literacy Day on September 8 with special guest PEN Canada
- Peer reviewed Project Read's 'Yes I Can: A mental Health Guide for Adult Literacy Facilitators'
- Piloted our Cashier Training Course with Fanshawe College and YMCA Simcoe Muskoka

Recognition

- Action Read nominated for an ABC Life Literacy Innovation Award
- Action Read executive director Mira Clarke named a Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary Trillium
- Action Read volunteer Paul Mesman wins a Winegard Award for outstanding service
- Mira Clarke nominated for a Women of Distinction Award in the education and training category
- Action Read featured on CTV News' Local Heroes segment



Early Start Statistics

- 153 children, 85 adults
- 522 program hours, 247 sessions facilitated at 6 program sites throughout Guelph
- 90% literacy and numeracy skill improvement rate
- 94% rate enjoyment of the program as 'high' (11%) or 'extremely high' (83%)

Adult Program Statistics

- 196 learners
- 42% self-identify as having a disability
- 45% receive training supports (transportation / childcare)
- Goals: 71% employment, 19% independence-related, 10% further education
- Hours: 1430 GED class, 1300 groups, 7500 tutoring
- Volunteers: 112 tutors, 30 administration and fundraising
- 96% learner satisfaction rate

Don Young - Betty Bean-Kennedy Award for Outstanding Volunteer

There are so many wonderful volunteers at Action Read. However, the contribution of one can be described as particularly outstanding. Don Young has been a front desk volunteer and tutor since 2015. Don quickly joined our Board of Directors in 2016, and currently serves as the Treasurer. Action Read has benefited enormously from his dedication to our mission. Don currently helps out twice a week on the front desk and tutors not one but two learners each week, as well as all the work he does on the board. Don also put in many hours helping with our move this year. From checking out locations, packing, painting and moving, we truly appreciate all his time and support through a challenging year. Don's commitment to literacy and his compassion for others inspires us all.



Judy Noonan – Shirley Almack Award for Leadership

Over the years, Judy has modeled a passionate commitment to learning. Judy attends math group, the Aboriginal creative writing group, book club and is a member of our board of directors.

Judy is a strong advocate for accessibility in our community. She is the first to welcome a new learner and take them under her warm wing. She readily volunteers where needed and promotes our services in the city. Judy's kindness, great sense of humour and compassion for others are seen daily. She brings a sparkle to everyone she meets.



Colleen Harper - Doris Middleton Award for Overcoming Barriers

Colleen came to Action Read over a year ago. She will tell you that it took her awhile to get up the courage to walk through our doors. Colleen has overcome those fears and has achieved so much more. She has become a great advocate for Action Read and literacy learning, speaking to groups and CTV news about the barriers she has faced in her life and how Action Read has helped. Colleen volunteers on the front desk and is always the first person to offer help to other learners and staff. She has made so much progress, and her enthusiasm for learning is infectious! Colleen's passion, joy, generosity and willingness to help others is exemplary, and she continues to meet the goals she sets for herself.



Stephen Aspinall and Emily Quinton - The Action Read Community Award

Stephen and Emily have been active members of the Action Read community for many years. Anyone who has been to our Holiday Party in recent years has experienced Stephen's culinary talents as he prepares and cooks the turkey and other meats. The sides, prepared by Emily, are perfect in their tastiness and visual display. Their support has even extended to recruiting friends to work alongside them. As well, they created and launched a GoFundMe initiative that raised funds to support our work. This past year Steve and Emily contributed their talents once again by donating a silent auction package to our annual FLOW event. We are glad to take this opportunity to recognize all the hard work and dedication Steve and Emily have put in, and appreciate the ongoing support that you both provide!





Jasmine

Jasmine's daughter and daycare child love coming to the Early Start program. They like that the puzzles and activities are really educational, like matching games and colour recognition. As Jasmine says, "The kids love these, and I know that they are learning from it. We have come to this program for over 10 years and rearrange our schedule to include it when it moves. My daughter calls this her 'favourite playgroup'." After attending Action Read, Jasmine's daughter often goes to the alphabet magnets on the fridge and identifies letters by name and sound. Jasmine's kids are always excited to go to any Action Read program. Her daughter says 'Jan said...' when she wants to do something. She loves her teacher!"



Deb

Deb always wanted to write emails to family and friends, so she came to Action Read to get help. At Action Read she started to write poetry, which today plays a big part in her life. She has already written three books of poetry, and plans to write more. She is part of the book club, computer and writing groups, and attends workshops whenever she can. Deb says "I love that I can express and share my thoughts and feelings with others! Writing poetry has proven to me that I am capable and makes me feel empowered. I'm enjoying each and every moment of it!" Last year, Deb won the Doris Middleton Award for her dedication to learning.

Deb and Bill Donaldson

Financial Statement 2016-2017

Year ended March 31, 2017

	2017	2016
Opening balance, beginning of year	1,529	5,624
Revenue		
Government Grants (MAESD)	173,480	152,790
Other Grants (UW, Rotary, City of Guelph etc)	81,933	81,597
Fundraising	19,646	17,615
Total	275,059	252,002
Expenses		
Salaries and Benefits	178,281	183,467
Rent	33,870	34,410
Learner and Tutor Support	22,611	18,057
Office	10,158	3,660
Fundraising	8,109	1,515
Materials and resources	4,191	2,623
Telephone	3,839	3,381
Insurance	2,798	2,440
Professional fees	2,702	2,804
Equipment	1,984	220
Memberships	1,238	1,150
Books and subscriptions	249	282
Contingency Fund	4,489	0
Unspent TSA returned to MAESD	471	2,088
Total	274,993	259,097
Closing balance, year end	1,595	1,529

This statement is a summary of the income and net assets statements as they appear in the audit provided by Curtis-Villar Chartered Accountants. Copies of the full audit are available on request.

Board of Directors:

Jeffrey Guitard - Chair
Michael Brodzikowski - Vice Chair
Don Young - Treasurer
Bev Nuttall
David Alphonso
Shawn Knight
Judy Noonan
Barbara Stefaniak
Cassi Garrett
R. David Shakespeare

Staff:

Jan Sherman - Family Literacy Coordinator
Gabriel Smith - Group Learning Coordinator
Lynn Veronneau - Administrative Assistant
Lynda Lehman - Finance Manager
Mira Clarke - Executive Director
Joanne Morant - One-to-one Coordinator
Denia Anderson - Literacy Program Assistant
Don Peters - Computer Technician

Donor Honour Roll

Action Read would like to thank the many wonderful individuals, families, foundations and companies who provided financial and in-kind support in 2016-2017.

39 Carden St. Bistro
Adele Clarke
Adriana Magoulas
Anonymous
Ann Middleton
Anne Purkis and John Trubic
AKAL Vision - Dr. Jag Gill
Atmosphere café & etc.
Barb Minett
Barbara Chance
Barbara Stefaniak
Ben Barclay
Beverly Green
Bill Chan
Borealis Grille and Bar
Brenda and Cheryl Turner
Buns Master
C. Harold Jackson
Colin Chaplin
Chaplin Renovation &
Construction
Coriander
Cox Creek Cellars
David Atkinson
David Critch
David Wilke
Don Young
Dorothy M. Fisher
Downtown Guelph Business
Association
Economical Mutual Insurance
Company
Elizabeth Hanson
Gabriel Smith
Greg Buzbuzian
Guelph & District Association
of REALTORS
Guelph and District Labour
Council
Guelph Curling Club
Guelph Music
Guelph Storm Hockey Club
Hillside Festival
IODE Royal Wyndham Chapter
- Barbara Allen
Jan Sherman
Jane Tuer

Janet Wood
Janus Books - Kieran Dunn
Jean and Paul Truex
Jeron - Jennifer Parkinson
Jeff Guitard
Joanne McAuley
Joanne Morant
John and Ankie Verhart
John and Carol Miller
John Paul Pizzoferrato
Julie and Dan Raletic
Karen Richards
Le Petite Spa
LEX Scientific - Michael
Hoffbauer
Lois Gottlieb
Liz Morant
Loretta Wilke
Lynda Lehman
Malkim Hair Shop
Marilyn Clarke
Mark and Grace Evans
Mark Maidens
McNeil Consumer Healthcare -
Diane Rossi
Meow
Michael Noonan
The Family of Doris Middleton
Miijidaa café & bistro
Mira Clarke
Murray and Anne Matheson
Nancy Bligh
Nancy Swinehart
NU Consignment
On The Verge
Paramjeet and Amar Arneja
Patricia Tersigni
Paul Baker
Paula and Doug Gibson
Peter and Mary Lyall
Play with Clay
Pretty Chic Boutique
Print Solutions - Karen Fries
RBC-Citizens Engagement
Program
Rotary Guelph
Rotary Trillium
Rowe Farms

Royal City Lions Club Guelph
Scott McWhinnie
Shane Neilson
Shawn Knight
Sherwin-Williams Paints
(Store #8766)
Simply Wonderful Toys and
Gizmos
Starbucks (Gordon and
Wellington)
Starbucks (Stone Road Mall)
Stone Store Natural Foods
Stuart Ross
Studio 404 - Ross Davidson-
Pilson
Susan Conforzi
Sweet Violets
TAMBRO Construction Ltd. -
Bert Tami
Taste deTours
Terrance and Meri S. Cardow
The Attic
The Bookshelf
The Casual Gourmet
The Dragon
The Flour Barrel
The Guelph Grotto Indoor
Climbing Gym
The Joint Café
The Retired Teachers of
Ontario Wellington District 31
The Woolwich Arrow Pub
Tithorea
Valeriot Market
Vicanie's Fine Lingerie and
Luxuries
Vocamus Press
Wellington Brewery
Wendy Woodhouse
West End Bakery
Wild Rose
With The Grain
Women's Leadership Initiative
of McNeil Consumer Health
Care
WriteDesign – Art Kilgour

Action Read

COMMUNITY LITERACY CENTRE



Ontario

Canada

This Employment Ontario program is funded in part by the government of Canada and the government of Ontario and through the Canada-Ontario Job Fund Agreement.



United Way
Guelph Wellington
Dufferin

