

ACTION READ

Community Literacy Centre



SPARKING CHANGE
THROUGH LEARNING

Annual Report 2024-2025



Executive Director Message

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on the past year, I'm overwhelmed with gratitude for everything we've shared and accomplished together at Action Read. It is your ongoing support that helps us create a welcoming, inclusive space where people feel a sense of belonging, and where growth is not only possible, but celebrated.

At Action Read, we take pride in creating an environment that is safe, respectful, and supportive. Whether you're a learner, volunteer, board member, or staff, please know that your contributions are not just appreciated, they're the heart of what we do. Each person in our community brings something unique and valuable, and it's this spirit of collaboration that helps us thrive.

2024-2025 has been marked by uncertainty and challenge. Nonetheless, acts of service, learning breakthroughs, and moments of joy took place every day at Action Read. As we look ahead, our commitment remains the same: to nurture a space where people continue to grow and meet their goals, and to build lasting connections.

With your continued belief in our mission, I'm confident that together we'll continue to make a real difference.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

Mira Clarke
Executive Director



Board of Directors 2024-2025: Jacques Mireault, Phil Sadler, Denise Hollingsworth, Marsha Wallace, Kimm Khagram, Paul Carter, Junnivi Dedoroy, Mary Ann Riley, Kim Monk, Bruno Sengmany, Mira Clarke (staff)

Cover: Kirstin Rowley with her tutor Kris Sturgeon



Action Read's Mission:

To change the lives of Guelph adults and families through improved literacy, numeracy, computer, and other essential skills.

Our Guiding Principles:

- Everyone can learn
- Learning should be a positive experience
- Tutors and learners are active partners
- Diversity makes us strong
- We work with community partners to ensure that needs are met
- We continually reflect and grow to remain relevant and meaningful

Success happens when learners:

- Meet their goals
- Gain the confidence to use their new skills in managing or changing their lives
- Experience greater independence
- Experience increased capacity for growth and learning
- Move forward to other employment, civic, volunteer and / or educational opportunities





Highlights from 2024-2025

72

Learners accessed
transportation, childcare
& other supports

188

Adults strengthened their
literacy & math skills

103

Kids from 43 families joined
the Family Literacy program

217

Referrals made to and from
Action Read

61

Certificates earned in
Food Handler, WHIMIS,
Smart Serve

37

Learners participated in
one to one tutoring

52

Learners joined
digital literacy skills
programs

11

Financial literacy and
digital security
workshops delivered

7000

Hours contributed
by our volunteers

381

Books borrowed from
our resource centre

42

Average age of adults
in our program

24

Short term
employability training
courses delivered

94

Learners exited
having successfully
reached their goals

The People Who Bring our Mission to Life

BOARD

Bruno Sengmany
Denise Hollingsworth, Secretary
Kimm Khagram, Board Chair
Jacques Mireault
Junnivi Dedoroy
Kim Monk
Marsha Wallace
Mary Ann Riley
Paul Carter, Treasurer
Phil Sadler

STAFF

Brenda MacDonald, Family Literacy
Jan Sherman, Adult Literacy Facilitator
Joanne Morant, One-to-One Coordinator
Kirstin Duke, Adult Program Coordinator
Lynda Lehman, Finance Manager
Lynn Veronneau, Administrative Assistant
Mira Clarke, Executive Director
Thom Campbell, Group Learning Facilitator

VOLUNTEERS

Over 65 volunteers donated their time, talent and energy to helping people learn, and to doing the behind-the-scenes work that keeps Action Read healthy and strong.

Thank you for your generous service!

Joanne Morant, 1955-2025 Beloved Colleague and Friend

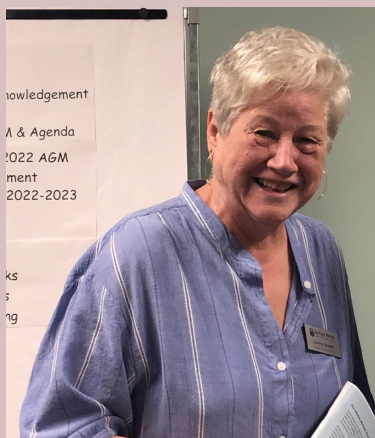
From 2010 to 2025, Joanne served as Action Read's One to One Coordinator, where her deep love for Action Read and her unwavering dedication shaped the lives of countless adult learners, volunteers, and families. As the first point of contact for many, she had a unique gift for turning fear into trust, offering a warm and welcoming presence rooted in compassion and respect. Her ability to connect, often through stories of her own learning journey, offered inspiration and hope.

Joanne's thoughtful, practical approach empowered individuals to overcome long-standing barriers. Her impact reached beyond the organization. A passionate ambassador for literacy and inclusion, she was a volunteer, mentor and connector for many community-building initiatives. Her legacy is one of kindness, resilience, creativity and a deep belief in the potential of every person. She is an enduring example of what it means to lead with heart.

Joanne will be deeply missed, but her spirit and the love she gave so freely will inspire us for years to come.



Joanne and Brandi



Joanne and staff, Jan 2025

LEARNING AND SERVICE AWARDS

Doris Middleton Award to Marim Marouf

Marim Marouf is a shining example of perseverance, warmth, and determination. Since joining Action Read a few years ago, she has brought an incredibly positive and uplifting spirit to her learning. Originally from Sudan, Marim came to Canada over 20 years ago and raised six children while carrying the hope of one day returning to her own learning journey. With only a Grade 3 education when she began, she has worked tirelessly to improve her literacy writing skills, showing remarkable courage and drive every step of the way.

Her progress is nothing short of inspiring. Marim approaches every challenge with unwavering dedication and a deep passion for learning that motivates everyone around her. She embraces new concepts with curiosity and a genuine desire to grow, no matter how difficult the task. It is this tenacity and joyful commitment that makes us proud to recognize Marim with this well-deserved award.

Shirley Almack Award to Kirstin Rowley

We are honoured to present the 2025 Shirley Almack Memorial Award to **Kirstin Rowley**, whose example reminds us that everyday dedication can have extraordinary impact. Kirstin is deeply dedicated to learning, not only in the classroom, but in every aspect of her life. She brings persistence, steadfast reliability, thoughtfulness, and self-direction to her learning journey, often working independently and with great motivation. She has built rich connections across the community, whether playing in the New Horizons band, practicing Tai Chi or working at a local bookstore, a job she's held for over 20 years.

Leadership can take many forms, and quiet strength is one of them. Kirstin shows leadership through consistency, self-advocacy, and courage. She is not afraid to speak her truth, to ask for what she needs, or to model what it means to keep learning with pride and purpose. We see you Kirstin! Congratulations.

The Betty Bean Kennedy Award to Paul Carter

Paul Carter has brought outstanding dedication, expertise, and fresh energy to his role as Treasurer on the Action Read Board. With extensive experience as both an educator and as a finance manager in arts based organizations, he applies his skills with precision and passion. He leads finance committee meetings, producing clear reports, and implementing quarterly internal audits to strengthen oversight. "Paul brings such dedication and energy to his role as Treasurer on the Board. He goes above and beyond!" says fellow Finance Committee member Jeff Guitard.

Paul is a superb communicator who brings joy and humour into every interaction. Whether supporting staff, mentoring learners or other Board members, or leading a workshop, he is approachable, thoughtful, focused and quick to offer a valuable perspective. "Whenever I have a quandary or a task I need him for he makes himself very available and always with good solid perspective and humour! He is a great choice for this award!" says staff member Lynda Lehman. Paul's mix of warmth and professionalism makes him an absolute pleasure to work with. We are deeply grateful for his many contributions.

FINANCIALS

Year ended March 31, 2025

	2025	2024
opening balance, beginning of year	3	-18
Revenue		
Government Grants (MLITSD)	260,230	260,230
Grants (United Way, City of Guelph, Project Read)	52,597	71,071
Fundraising	27,856	19,694
Total	340,683	350,995
Expenses		
Salaries and Benefits	252,070	255,393
Rent	37,200	35,400
Learner and Tutor Support	31,584	19,496
Office	10,075	8,518
Materials and Resources	6,606	5,903
Professional Fees	6,217	6,772
Insurance	5,234	4,478
Telephone	4,384	4,066
Hospitality	3,495	2,468
Travel	505	520
Memberships	461	245
Advertising and Promotion	410	554
Books and Subscriptions	291	206
Organizational Development	248	225
Equipment	179	8,990
To or from Contingency (+/-)	-18,276	-2,260
Total	340,683	350,974
closing balance, year end	3	3

This statement is a summary of the Income and Net Assets Statements as they appear in the Financial Statements provided by Curtis-Villar Chartered Accountants. Copies of Financial Statements are available upon request



Donors and Funders

Huge thanks for your generosity!

Ann Middleton	Lisa Feinberg
Art Kilgour	Lynda Lehman
Barbara Chance	Mervi McLuhan
Carin Headrick	Mira Clarke
Carl Nigro	Nancy Baker
Canada Helps	Nancy Fischer
Literacy for All Fund	Nancy Stevens
Cathy Fleming	Nancy Swinehart
Colin Chaplin	Nichola Martin
Cristian Hernandez	Parkwood Gardens
David Middleton	Neighbourhood Group
Denise Hollingsworth	Paul Carter
Don Peters	Phil and Leah Sadler
Dorothy M. Fisher	Rebecca McCreith
Elisabeth & Dave Coney	Rebecca Shine
Gary Hearn	Retired Teachers of
Grange Road East	Ontario Wellington
Neighbourhood Group	District 31 (RTO)
Guelph Public Library	Peter & Tonny Bulionis
Guelph Township	Ross Ireland
Public Schools	Rotary Club of
Reunion Committee	Guelph - Trillium
Howard Kennedy	Ryan Scott
James Clarke	Stephen Crane
Jane Tuer	Sue Cavanagh
Janet Wood	Susan Bard
Jeff Guitard	Sharon Nancekivell
Joan Napier	Shauna Dolby
Joanne Morant	Tom Kosir
John Carere	Upper Grand District
Joyce Allen	School Board
Kathy MacLean	Victor Davis Memorial
Kendra Dewar-McKinley	Court Housing
Kortright Hills	Wellington Country
Neighbourhood Group	Marketplace
Lenore Ralph	(Stephen Aspinall)



Did you know that **Action Read has a fund at the Guelph Community Foundation?** Every donation, large or small, helps support our learning programs. To give, visit www.guelphcf.ca and click the secure 'Donate' link.

8 Cork St. E, Guelph ON, Canada N1H 2W8 | 519-836-2759 | ActionRead.com | Charitable #133652214 RR0001

