

## Adult Learner Award Winner



### Sharon Bellion

Sharon grew up in Trinidad and came to Canada as an adult. She did not enjoy school because she said she did not understand anything so she dropped out in elementary school.

When Sharon's current tutor met her two years ago, she was working a full time job, a part time job, struggling

with health issues, and looking after her home and her daughter. In spite of all of this, she wanted to commit to improving her reading skills and began meeting her tutor every Thursday afternoon prior to going to work. They worked steadily and Sharon has improved from a grade 2 to a grade 4 reading level.

Recently Sharon told staff, ***"At last, reading feels so right for me. I love reading. My daughter never liked reading, but when she saw me read and heard how much reading has changed me, she started to want to read more with me... When we have a good attitude towards reading, our kids will feel the same."***

Sharon's love of reading and her dedication to continual improvement are things she wants to share with others in her community. She now encourages other people, including her ex-husband, to read and she volunteered to read to grade 2 students at Weinlos Elementary School.

Her goal is to continue working with her tutor until she improves her reading fluency to a Grade 10 level and she would like to work with children. Sharon's success story is remarkable and she confirms the adage, **it is never too late to learn.**

## Family Learner Award Winner



### Tamara Clark

Tamara and her family have been active participants in multiple programs with the Centre for Family Literacy since 2013. In that time, Tamara has displayed an incredible commitment and passion for literacy and learning with her family, other families, and the community.

Tamara consistently participates in family literacy programs including: Rhymes that Bind, 3,2,1 FUN!, Summer Literacy Program, and the local C.O.W. Bus. She credits these programs with the early development of her children's speech and vocabulary. Tamara said, ***"I feel like the regular interaction and repetition of songs and rhymes have helped them build a strong vocabulary."***

She regularly uses different ideas and techniques she has learned in the programs at home and in the family's daily activities. The family's learning is supported further with the attendance of Lorna, Tamara's mother, at programs. This intergenerational approach has bonded the family and strengthened their relationships through learning together.

Tamara recently used strategies and techniques learned from our programs to facilitate a family program at her church. These were well received and she now shares the activities with families on a regular basis.

Tamara has made it her mission to recruit more families to our programs; she invites the families, gives them rides to attend, plans and organizes events with other families to keep them connected, and is an amazing role model to others. She is truly a family literacy ambassador.

## Community Leadership Award Winner



### Seta Menas

As the Assistant Director at the Beverly Day Care & Family Resource Centre, Seta advocates for parents and helps them understand the role they play as the children's first teachers. She works tirelessly to ensure families in her community receive the support they need to thrive.

Seta is the Assistant Director at the Beverly Day Care and Family Resource Centre. She works tirelessly to ensure that families in her community receive the support they need through a variety of programs by:

- Organizing a Collective Kitchen where the families come together to share a meal and make connections with others
- Facilitating workshops such as: How to Talk so Kids Will Listen, Triple P (parenting course), Health for Two, and Money Mentors
- Coordinating WECAN Food Baskets and delivering food to families who do not have transportation
- Gathering clothes for a Clothing Exchange
- Coordinating weekly donations of bread from Cobbs Bakery

Seta has been involved in offering the Centre for Family Literacy's Rhymes that Bind program for over 3 years. She believes that rhymes develop the human connection and intimacy between parent and child that is imperative for bonding and attachment. She is a strong believer in community and her programs provide a safe, fun and relaxing environment for parents and their children.

Seta advocates for parents and helps them understand they are their children's first teacher. As one parent put it, ***"She brings people together of all backgrounds and really helps bring a sense of community to the groups she runs!"***

