



Lois Hole Memorial Literacy Awards 2017

Adult Learner Award Winner



Shawn Griffiths

Shawn is originally from Jamaica and has lived in Canada for eight years. He says, "I got here on a Friday, began work on Monday and have been working ever since." He is an outgoing, charismatic, friendly young man who is self-driven and hardworking.

Shawn came to the Centre for Family Literacy 8 years ago. He recalls: "I started working at an early age because my mom was a poor, single mom and she could not afford school fees for the three of us." He also explains that he was often made to feel stupid because of his learning challenges. He was continuously mocked and called names. In later years, he was diagnosed with dyslexia and Attention Deficit Disorder.

Despite these fundamental challenges, Shawn is committed to reaching his personal and professional goals. He says that his reading has improved from grade three to grade six, and although it's not where he wants to be yet, he is on his way there.

Shawn's goals are to acquire a better paying job, become a ticketed welder and advance in his trade. Most of all, he wants to be able to help his daughter with her homework, and be able to understand and assist her in building her reading skills.

To achieve his goals, Shawn attended classes for 6-8 hours a day several times per week, followed by one to two-hour tutoring sessions after classes – and his motivation never waned. He has completed several courses at NorQuest College and is going to graduate from the apprenticeship program in March 2017. He also goes to the Learning Centre for literacy classes and attends P.A.L.S. for math classes.

Shawn is incredibly grateful for the help he has received, saying "I value it so much to know that there are people who care. I want to read to young kids and would like to encourage struggling adults not to give up. With determination, they will be able to read someday. I have always wanted to write my story and inspire others to push forward and overcome their fears."

Family Learner Award Winner



Callie Perry

Callie and her three children aged 4, 2, and 1 have been active participants in the Rhymes that Bind Program with the Centre since 2016. Despite facing considerable challenges, Callie has displayed a commitment and passion for literacy and learning with her family and the community.

Callie's son Lloyd is a young boy with developmental and physical disabilities. He has a wheelchair, uses a feeding tube and needs assistance with mobility. Like his mom, he is always smiling and happy. Callie's daughter Nora has speech difficulties, and Callie's baby, Arthur, is an active toddler.

Callie diligently brings all three of her children to the program, usually with no assistance. Callie has shown dedication and perseverance in getting to the program, managing the needs of her children, and teaching them the skills suggested to her.

Callie's children eagerly and actively participate and communicate with other children in the program because Callie takes the time to work with them at home and at play. She speaks, reads, sings and plays with her children in ways that include them all. Callie has used the rhymes, songs, and tips she has learned from the program at home, and as a result, Nora's speech has improved.

Callie has an incredibly positive outlook on life and goes over and above the typical parenting routine. The extra care, attention, and love she gives to her children have inspired and impressed her program facilitators, who both say that Callie should be proud of every milestone her children reach as each one reached is due to her efforts.

Community Leadership Award Winner



Karen Tubbs

Karen is a passionate literacy advocate and family literacy rock star. Karen spent 25 years as an elementary teacher at Sundre's River Valley school, where she specialized in music and early childhood literacy. Following her retirement, she was enticed back to work by a role perfectly aligned with her skills and passion as Sundre Library's Program

Coordinator. In this role, she handles the creation and delivery of family literacy programs at the library, including Rhyme and Rhythm for preschoolers, Wiggles and Giggles for toddlers, and the 1000 Books before Kindergarten Initiative. She also developed Busy Bags (themed backpacks combining books/activities) and Express Bags (grab-n-go curated, age-appropriate read-aloud books).

Karen excels at community outreach and has formed strong partnerships with Alberta Health Services prenatal program, local doctor offices, Sundre ParentLINK, playschools, the Sundre Home School Association community, and River Valley elementary. During Family Literacy week, she organizes a number of activities and programs including celebrity readings, targeted Dad & Kids programs, and other fun events that bring children and their families together in literacy. She is a creative fundraiser; her recent Scarecrow Competition attracted entries from a number of community groups, with the money raised going back into the creation of free literacy resources for program participants.

Jamie Syre, Sundre's Library manager, says "Before Karen, our family literacy programs were pretty basic. She has vastly expanded the number and variety of programs we offer. It's amazing how she has managed to carry on the momentum of growing literacy in the schools and aligned that knowledge with the library and Sundre community. Karen's energy never falters and she is absolutely energized by her programs!"

Outside of work, Karen shows her passion for literacy by delivering her church's Sunday school 'children's feature' story time. "In my work with children and parents," Karen says, "I see over and over again that nurturing family literacy in our community helps build connected families, confident children, and capable, creative learners." She's also a member of the Sundre community choir and a volunteer Board member with the Sundre Arts Centre.



Centre for

Family Literacy

11642 142 St NW Edmonton AB T5M 1V4 T 780.421.7323 E info@famlit.ca W famlit.ca