



# The Centre for Family Literacy Centre Page

## LITERACY IS THE KEY TO REDUCING POVERTY

*The Centre for Family Literacy is dedicated to helping families grow and prosper.*

**F**rontier College recently hosted a National Forum on Literacy and Poverty. The forum was held to discuss the interconnection between literacy and poverty and to encourage a dialogue on strategies and interventions having a positive impact on addressing these issues.

The discussion paper prepared for the forum provided key data on poverty and literacy in Canada. The paper stated, "Poverty exists as a wall of compounding barriers." It went on to say,

"Things like low literacy, low income, poor health, limited mobility, social isolation, and compromised mental health can easily reinforce one another.

For people in situations of poverty, access to educational services, supports, and opportunities may be blocked by other barriers in their lives."

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## TUTOR REFLECTION

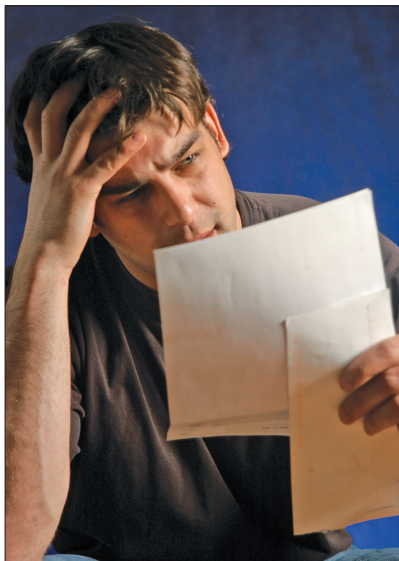
**M**y first learner was Rose from a small village outside Accra, Ghana. She appeared at the office for her first visit with downcast eyes and wearing colourful but mismatched clothing. She had a scarred face that was the result of an accident with a machete.

On that first visit it became obvious Rose had a strong Christian faith. She told me that as a girl she had prayed to God that someone would come and take her out of the village. Her schooling was irregular because many times the children were loaded into trucks to work in the fields. Her goal was to learn to read the King James Bible and no other version would do. She also wanted to be able to read the recipes in the restaurant kitchen where she worked.

Rose was rescued by a young man from her village who had returned from University in Edmonton to take his Ghanaian girl friend back to Canada. The girl friend had not waited for him so he arranged for Rose to fly to Edmonton where they married and had two children.

Rose was an intelligent woman and improved her reading and writing skills quickly. She drove a car, but stayed on familiar routes because she couldn't read the signs. One of the early activities we did was to go walking and read all the signs we could find. We went to the Festival of Trees which she loved and again I kept her busy reading signs! We cut out shopping ads and she learned the names of fruits and vegetables and how to spell

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SUMMER  
2017

## LITERACY IS KEY TO REDUCING POVERTY

*Continued*

Alberta literacy practitioners know that community based literacy programs are key to overcoming the multiple barriers of poverty. With a learner-centred focus, they provide a non-threatening environment, a focus on the learner's strengths, a flexible and responsive approach addressing the learning styles of participants, and are culturally sensitive using resources and methods appropriate for participants.

Statistically we have strong evidence of the economic impact of investing in literacy. A 1% increase in literacy skills would yield a 1.5% or \$18.4 billion permanent increase in our GDP. The personal stories are even more impressive. On a daily basis people share how our programs have made a difference in their lives. They tell us they are the first in their family to graduate from high school, or they have received a promotion at work, or they are now able to read the school website and help their children with their homework.

Investing in community based literacy programs at a grassroots level is a cost effective strategy for addressing the social challenges of low literacy and poverty. The payoff to the economy and society is significant, but more importantly the investment changes lives.

## TUTOR REFLECTION

*Continued*

them. She could now read the recipes at work and didn't have to ask for help.

Rose regularly received mail from Ghana which her husband read to her. The first time she opened her own letter and was able to tell him what was in it, he didn't believe her. Sadly, I think he felt threatened by her new skills and slowly there were excuses as to why she couldn't come to see me. However, she had reached her goal of being able to read the Bible and there was no stopping her! When her visits stopped, I asked her to write to me and we corresponded back and forth for a few months. Her husband's goal was to return to Accra and that is probably where they are now.

I learned a lot from Rose. As a volunteer tutor for over 20 years, I have continued to do so from all my learners. My continual learning has come in the form of looking at things from different angles, including words and grammar and learning different aspects of life from these precious and brave people. It has been such a fulfilling part of my life.

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS



The Centre for Family Literacy is seeking nominations for the 2017 Ruth Hayden Family Literacy Practitioner Award. This award was established to recognize the accomplishments of individual practitioners in the field of family literacy.

Dr. Hayden was a passionate advocate of family literacy and the important role parents play as their child's first teacher. Nominees should demonstrate the same passion and commitment to working in their community to create learning opportunities for families through programs, services, and support.

**The deadline for nominations is August 4, 2017.** The nomination form and full criteria can be found on our website at [http://www.familit.ca/events/awards\\_pract.shtml](http://www.familit.ca/events/awards_pract.shtml). The award will be presented at the Literacy and Learning Symposium in September 2017.

## WINE & WORDS, CELEBRATING 10 YEARS



*Jim Cuddy, Devin Cuddy, Danny Michel, Jeremy Fisher and Andy Maize*



*Mary Pinkosk and Jim Cuddy*



*Mark Scholz*



*At the After Party*

Once upon a time there was a band of fearless volunteers who decided to raise money for the Centre for Family Literacy. They decided they would hold an event in the spring of 2008, aiming for around 200 people with disposable income, and a net profit of \$20,000. Keeping with the literacy theme, they wanted a speaker who was an author – not limited to any specific category.

And so Wine & Words began... On March 2008 at the Royal Mayfair Golf Club, the capacity crowd came to eat, drink, and hear our first "author," Jim Cuddy. That evening we raised \$37,929.

Jim began the tradition of inviting other artists to join him starting with his Blue Rodeo partner Greg Keillor, followed by Kathleen Edwards (2010), Dustin Bentall and Kendal Carson (2011), Luke Doucet and Melissa McClelland (2012), Wayne Petti (2013), Danny Michel (2014), Devin Cuddy (2015), and Oh Susanna (2016).

In 2009, Corb Lund became involved with Wine & Words and his first poker evening was auctioned for \$8,100. Corb's poker nights and concerts have raised \$146,600 for the Centre.

Mark Scholz has worn many hats over the years including MC, Auctioneer, and Sommelier. His humour and doggedness have helped keep the guests engaged and bidding on the live auction items.

In celebration of the 10th Anniversary of Richardson GMP Evening of Wine & Words, Jim invited back Danny Michel and Devin Cuddy, and two newcomers to the event, Jeremy Fisher and Andy Maize. It was a night to remember, ending with an After Party at The Needle Vinyl Tavern, and we raised \$94,000 for the Centre. A big thanks to all who have supported us over the past 10 years.

Visit <https://redwardsphoto.pixieset.com/winewords2017> to view all the great photos of the evening!

## IMPORTANT DATES

*Links fore Literacy Golf Tournament*

**12:30 pm**

**Wednesday, August 16  
The Links at Spruce Grove  
Golf Course**

**Register** online on our website: [www.famlit.ca](http://www.famlit.ca)

*International Literacy Day*

**Friday, September 8**

*Literacy & Learning Symposium*

**September 25 - 29**

### PLEASE NOTE:

Our blog will be on a summer schedule, publishing only every other week.



Online donations to the Centre can be made through [CanadaHelps.org](http://CanadaHelps.org)



The Centre for Family Literacy gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of the following:



## SUMMER BOREDOM BUSTERS



How many times have you heard a child say “there is nothing to do, I’m bored”? Here are a few ideas kids will love and will keep them busy this summer.

- Think outside the box. Make a fort, car, bed, or pirate ship with cardboard boxes.
- On a road trip, play a licence plate game, finding the alphabet, in order, using only licence plates or signs.
- Organize a talent show. Have the kids make musical instruments using empty water bottles and some dried beans for shakers. A plastic container and spoons make a great drum.
- Get active! Use tables, chairs, and blankets or towels to make an obstacle course or relay race.
- Go bug hunting with an insect book in hand. See how many different creatures live in your yard.

For more ideas and activities, download the Centre’s free **Flit** App (Families Learning and Interacting Together) or check out our blog. Links to both can be found on our homepage, [www.familit.ca](http://www.familit.ca)

### YES, I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Your support will help us make a difference in the lives of Alberta families! Together we can make Alberta a healthy, literate society where all are able to contribute and succeed.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss Dr.

First Name

Last Name

Company/Organization

E-mail Address

Home Phone

Work Phone

Fax Number

Address

City

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Enclosed is my gift of:

\$25

\$50

\$100

Other \$

Payment option:

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Cheque

Cash

Mastercard

Credit card #

Expiry date

Cardholder name

Cardholder Signature

For recognition purposes:

I wish my name to appear as follows:

I wish this gift to remain anonymous

Charitable registration number 869472720 RR0001

### Literacy Develops in Families First

The Centre for Family Literacy is dedicated to helping Alberta grow and prosper. Our innovative programs, training and research help Alberta families achieve what they imagine—improved education, jobs and health.

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