

## LITERACY NORTH HALTON

# 2020-2021

# ANNUAL REPORT







### **Empowering Learners to Reach their Full Potential**

We provide local, high quality literacy and essential skills instruction to adults in support of their personal goals for independence, employment, and further education or training, particularly to those most in need.

We offer a variety of part-time Literacy and Basic Skills programs for adults aged 19+ who require essential skills upgrading in reading, writing, basic math and basic computer skills for the workplace. In partnership with Sheridan College, we also offer the ACE – Academic and Career Entrance – upgrading program. Adults wishing to pursue college entrance or an apprenticeship can earn grade 12 equivalency in English, Math, and Science. In addition, GED test (high school equivalency) preparation is also available.

Why is adult literacy so important?

We often think of literacy as only the ability to read and write with ease. In reality, the modern definition of literacy is much broader. Reading, writing, and numeracy are part of a larger set of essential skills that we use every day at work, at home, and in the community. Literacy includes computer and digital technology skills, oral communication, and more. It involves understanding and being able to use the information required in today's society in order to achieve your goals, reach your potential and navigate more easily in daily life and at work.

(Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy (http://mtml.ca/about-literacy/))

# Core Programs

### **RSW+ Tutoring Program for Adults**

Our Adult Tutoring Program offers 1:1 and small group tutoring for adults looking to improve their essential reading, writing, or math skills from the basics to the grade 9 level.

- Improve the ability to read and understand workplace and school materials
- Build the skills needed to communicate more effectively in writing
- Improve fundamental numeracy skills
- Online learning opportunities

### **CSW Computer Skills for Work Program**

Basic Skills for employment in a small, tutor-led, group setting.

- Introduction to computers, Microsoft Windows and Microsoft Office Applications
- Business communication and numeracy skills
- Email
- Internet and the web for work
- File Management
- Online learning opportunities

### **Sheridan College ACE Program**

In partnership with Sheridan College, our ACE – Academic and Career Entrance – program helps students with a goal of college admission, apprenticeship, or a better job.

- Earn grade 12 equivalency in Math, English, Biology, & Chemistry for admission to Ontario college programs
- Earn an ACE (grade 12 equivalency) Certificate recognized by Ontario colleges
- Prepare for Apprenticeship or Pre-Apprenticeship training
- Or, prepare to write the GED test (High School Equivalency Certificate)

alnh.ca/programs/

# Board of Directors

Literacy North Halton is governed by a Board of Directors, which is mandated to ensure the organization fulfills its mission. Acting in this capacity, the Board of Directors is responsible for:

- Upholding Literacy North Halton's Policies, Procedures and By-laws;
- Reviewing and monitoring applicable government grants;
- Supporting the recruitment of staff and volunteers, as required;
- Evaluating the delivery and success of all programs;
- Monitoring the financial and legal affairs;
- Securing sufficient funds for operation, including overseeing the development and implementation of a fundraising program;
- Establishing ad hoc Committees to support and promote Literacy North Halton as required;
- Reviewing the long term strategic plan on a regular basis.

President/Board Chair Denise Dilbey
Secretary Kim Sopinka
Director Ami Gopal
Director Sherry Farago

Director Dr. Oladapo Kayode Opasina

Director Bruce Catoen
Director Jennifer McAleer
Director Patricia Waters

All members who served on the board during the 2020-2021 fiscal year are listed. (April 1/20- March 31/21)

# The Sudden Shift to Remote Delivery in LBS

A survey report addressing the challenges and priorities in Ontario's Literacy and Basic Skills program during the spring of 2020



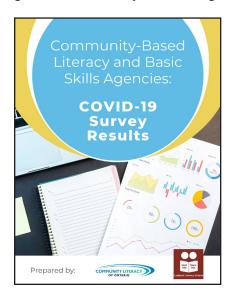
Click the above image to read the report

# Board Chair Report

Resilience and adaptability have been the key words during our Literacy North Halton (LNH) fiscal 2020/21 period. Local communities were under various stay-at-home orders, cocooned inside and safely out of the virus's reach, unless of course you were deemed to be an essential worker. While our staff was knee deep tackling challenges, the collective effort was to ensure that LNH implemented policies, training and supports to meet the immediate and long-term needs of adult learners in the communities of Milton, Georgetown, and Acton.

Although LNH's Board of Directors started and ended our fiscal year in COVID-19 lockdowns, the Board quickly shifted gears to using digital meeting conferencing and secure online document portals to ensure sharing of information and managing our fiduciary duties.

During the pandemic, we continued to have a strong network of partners and supporters, who understand that access to local essential skills building contributes to healthy and sustainable communities. The effects of the pandemic on the most vulnerable, including loss of employment, will create a continuing demand for our local, high quality literacy and essential skills training. We are grateful for the continuing local community support. The United Way of Halton & Hamilton and community partners such as Halton Hills Public Libraries, Milton Public Library, and local EO agencies assisted our organization in the way of knowledge, experience, and resource sharing throughout the year.



Literacy North Halton is continuously grateful to the Maple Lodge Farm Foundation, and our generous donors and sponsors. Acknowledging COVID-19 guidelines and safety protocols, the LNH Board of Directors took on new strategies to engage our supporters in lieu of our traditional in-person fundraising events. Thank you to everyone who participated in our virtual Bingo for Literacy. We embrace the outlook of an enhanced digital world of social and fundraising events as a vital tool in providing financial assistance for operating expenses and new programming initiatives.

On behalf of the LNH Board of Directors, thank you to our Executive Director, staff, instructors and volunteer tutors for their dedication, talent, and patience throughout the year. This year enabled us to appreciate how energy, enthusiasm, and effort contribute collectively to a strong and agile organization dedicated to providing the highest standard of programs and services to support learners in achieving goals, reaching their potential, and navigating more easily in daily life and at work.

Denise Dilbey Board Chair

### **Financial Overview**

In addition to core operating funding for EO LBS Service Delivery from the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD), funding was provided for pandemic health, safety, and training supplies to allow the return of learners to a safe, socially-distanced classroom in the Fall. Literacy North Halton has also been assigned delivery of the Corrections Literacy Initiative (CLI) at the Maplehurst Corrections Complex in Milton. A delay in facility access due to COVID-19 at various points within the fiscal year meant reduced expenditures and an adjustment in the funding allocation. The United Way Halton & Hamilton restructured its overall funding model, and LNH was successful in our application for the new Feed funding initiative, with approval through F2024.

After a request for tender was sent out, the LNH Board confirmed SB Partners LLP as the new auditing firm at the January Board meeting. Literacy North Halton ended the year in a net deficit position due to a shortfall in fundraising, and other donations and resource fees. We were unable to run our Scrabble® for Literacy Event in the Georgetown community due to pandemic lockdown and in its place piloted an online Bingo for Literacy event that was enjoyed by those who attended. We remain truly grateful to have passionate donors and supporters, and this year is no exception.

Despite the challenges the pandemic brought to program and service delivery, LNH remained fiscally strong, and the LNH Board of Directors consistently monitored the financial health of the organization throughout the year.

# Executive Director Report

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented many challenges, along with some unique opportunities to our Adult Learning Centre - Literacy North Halton (ALC-LNH) essential skills program delivery. As the pandemic took hold, it became increasingly more difficult to serve the most vulnerable learners, those with more barriers including low literacy, lack of foundational digital literacy skills, and access to computer hardware, software, and the Internet. Conversely, with the tools and resources acquired to transition to alternative learning formats, ALC-LNH is now well positioned to offer blended and hybrid learning opportunities to support varying learner program demand.

After the early pandemic months disrupted the ability for many to meet their basic needs and forced community agencies to transition service delivery models, the second half of the year brought an uptake in client inquires and learners into programming. In the Fall, ALC-LNH continued to offer hybrid (in-class and online) programming in line with regional public health policies. By Winter, all programming transitioned back to online during the pandemic lock down and remained so as the pandemic third wave took hold.

Demand from learners with an independence goal path continued to be low, as most did not have the digital literacy skills or access to participate in online learning. Our Computer Skills for Work programming moved online with a tutor-led, interactive learning model. Learners have made significant progress and have provided very positive feedback. Demand continued to increase for our Sheridan College ACE Program and learner attendance was more consistent than earlier in the year. Progress in delivering the new EO Corrections Literacy Initiative has been slow as the pandemic intermittently closed the Maplehurst Corrections Complex to outside programs.

To support programming, ALC-LNH made investments in online assessment and learning tools. Program staff managed the delivery of a variety of learning options and invested increased time in assessment, learner and tutor tech support, and accommodation for changing learner life and family dynamics. Our small group class capacities were decreased both online to support effective learning, and in class due to pandemic health and safety protocols. Our program staff have recently worked with local EO and community agencies to host webinars outlining program options to gain high school equivalency for employment, apprenticeship, and further education.

In Spring 2021 both the Provincial and Federal governments released their budgets focused on pandemic management and stimulating the economic recovery. Continued investments will be made in workforce development and in upskilling and training for employment in key sectors, including those impacted by the pandemic: skills trades and technical occupations; supportive health services; hospitality and tourism; small businesses; information & communications technology; and advanced manufacturing. To help workers with their training expenses, the Ontario government is proposing a new Ontario Jobs Training Tax Credit for 2021. The Federal government is proposing a new Skills for Success program that would help Canadians at all skills levels improve their foundational and transferable skills, such as literacy and numeracy, and soft skills.

The pandemic has targeted the most socioeconomically disadvantaged. Our goal is to work with clients who are most in need and who have may have barriers to learning including adults without grade 12 education or extended time out of education or training; unemployed adults or those working in precarious employment; older adults seeking to stay current in the workforce; those who identify with having a disability; indigenous peoples; immigrants, newcomers, and refugees; and women.



Kudos to adults in our communities who have committed to achieving their learning goals in such a difficult year. And my sincere thanks to our staff, board, volunteers and community stakeholders for their efforts and support.

Respectfully, Michele Proud

# Programming

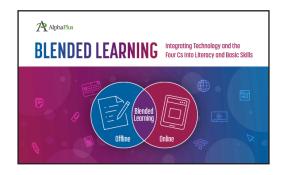
It has been another year of continuous learning for all of us – staff, instructors, volunteers, and learners. In many ways, the original stay at home order in spring of 2020 helped to better prepare us for the challenges and opportunities that followed. Lack of technology skills and barriers to tech resources and Wi-Fi continued to be a challenge for some; however, we were fortunate to welcome learners back into the classroom during the fall term and utilized that time as best we could to help prepare for the transition to virtual learning that was inevitably to come.

We supported learners and volunteer tutors through practice Zoom/Google Meets and LMS virtual sessions and equipped them with workbooks and lesson resources that were often mailed or even delivered by hand. We laughed (and occasionally cried) through endless hours of tech support as we sometimes struggled to navigate the changes ourselves, and we celebrated each success along the way.

Still, for some with greater literacy challenges or others who were exhausted after full days of supporting their own children's schooling, online learning became overwhelming and lessons were put on hold. In contrast, others embraced the opportunity of having more time at home to dedicate to learning, and we saw learners excel while gaining valuable experience navigating learning management systems for the first time.

Recognizing the challenge of adapting our traditional paper-based assessment and evaluation tools, program staff made significant investments to create professional digital intake forms, online assessments aligned with the OALCF, and evaluation tasks that can be completed on a laptop, tablet or even a smartphone. These updated tools will be invaluable as we expect demand for hybrid learning options will continue long after the pandemic ends, as will the added value of

flexible class options.

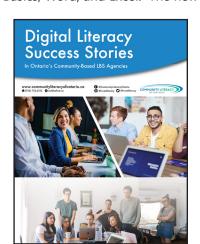


Lastly, although it has been a challenge to conduct outreach to agencies and prospective clients virtually, we have been working hard to maintain those crucial connections by developing and delivering personalized online webinars and virtual information sessions. Our heartfelt thanks go to everyone who helped us to turn this past year's challenges into a chance for learning and growth.

Alyson Findlay Senior Program Coordinator

It has been an interesting year. Congratulations to our Computer Skills for Work learners and dedicated tutors! We started and ended our year in a pandemic lock down, but were able to assist many adult learners achieve their goals of improving their digital literacy and business communication skills for employment or further education.

We were briefly able to offer in-person classes in Fall 2020, within COVID-19 protocols. In January, the pandemic forced a switch to online using Zoom. We divided our traditional 8-week programs into 4-week segments, focusing on Computer Basics, Word, and Excel. The new format was embraced by tutors and learners. We received plenty of positive feedback



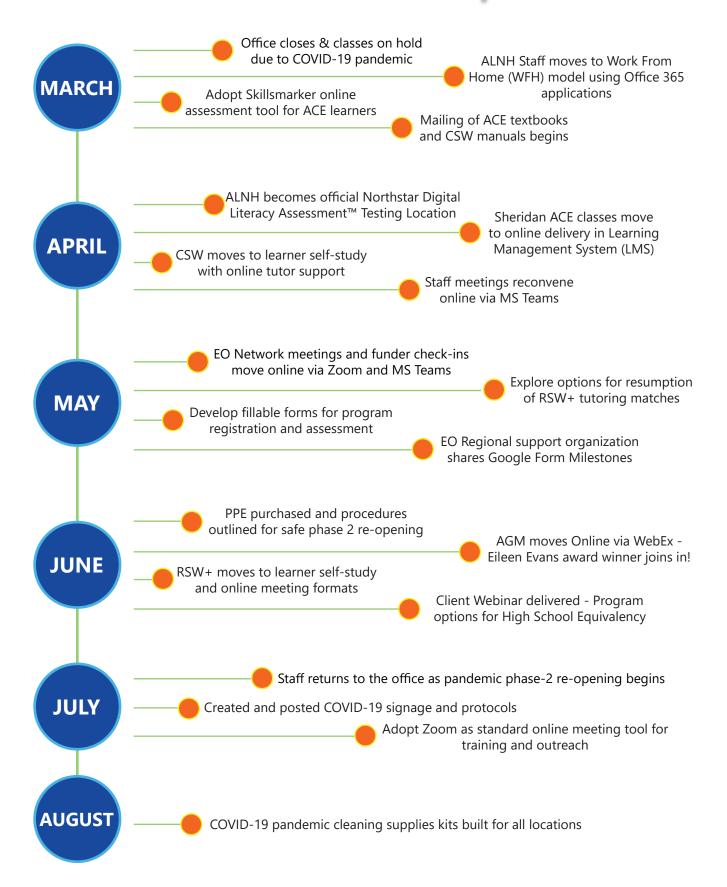
as our learners improved their confidence in using technology and many were surprised how much they enjoyed the convenience of online learning. With program staff and tutor support, learners persevered through many digital challenges and adapted well.

In partnership with the Centre for Skills-Immigrant Services, ALC-LNH coordinated a CPA Financial Literacy for Newcomers program. Approximately 25 new Canadians participated in the 2-day virtual workshop led by a local CPA volunteer tutor who engaged and empowered learners with knowledge about money management, credit, and taxes in Canada.

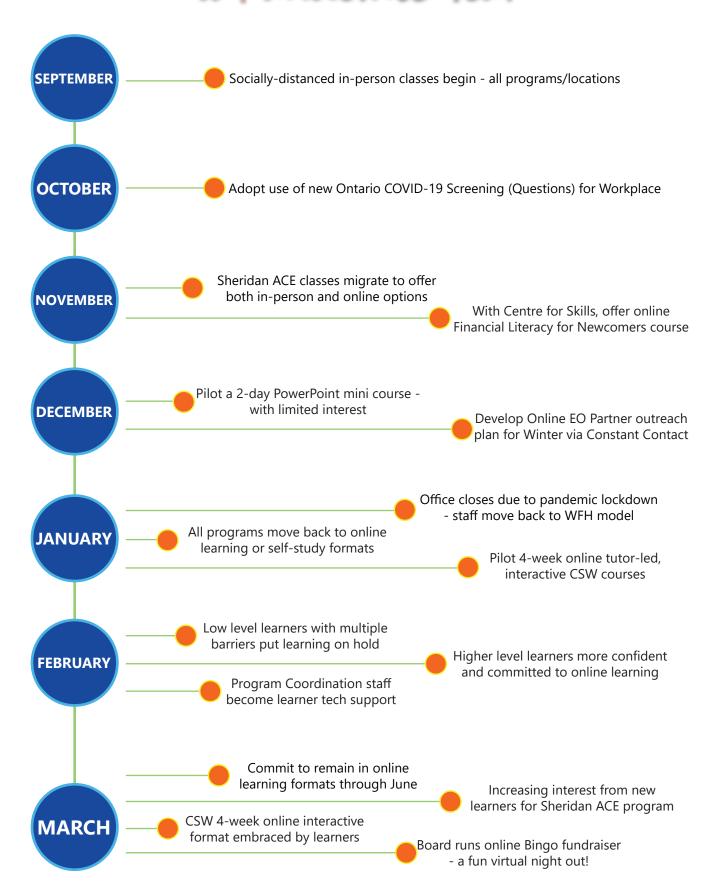
My heartfelt thanks to the staff, volunteer board members and tutors, and learners, for their dedication to adult education and lifelong learning.

Andrea Le Grand Program Coordinator, Digital Literacy

# Service Delivery in



# a Pandemic Year



# Professional Development

A sampling of the online learning/webinars our staff participated in this past year:



- Workforce/Workplace Resources and Best Practices in LBS
- Service Coordination
- · Perspectives on Partnering and Planning in LBS



- Video Meetings
- Connecting via Mobile Apps
- Online Classes
- Texting from Computer



Information, Referral, and Customer Service Training



• Engaging Learners Through Social Media



Social Media Marketing Mastery



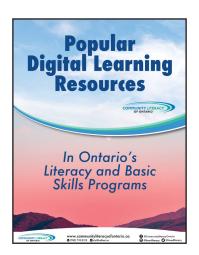
- Northstar Online Learning
- Getting Started with NorthStar



- Get to Know the GED
- Skills for Writing



Socially Distanced Staff Meetings







To the Directors of Literacy North Halton (o/a Adult Learning Centre)

### **Independent Auditors' Report**

### **Qualified Opinion**

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Literacy North Halton (o/a Adult Learning Centre) (the Organization), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2021, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets, and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In our opinion, except for the possible effects of the matter described in the Basis for Qualified Opinion paragraph, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Literacy North Halton (o/a Adult Learning Centre) as at March 31, 2021 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### **Basis for Qualified Opinion**

In common with many not-for-profit organizations, Literacy North Halton (o/a Adult Learning Centre) derives revenue from fundraising and donations, the completeness of which is not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, verification of these revenues was limited to amounts recorded in the records of Literacy North Halton (o/a Adult Learning Centre North). Therefore, we were not able to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to revenue and excess of revenues over expenditures, assets, and net assets for the year ended March 31, 2021.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our qualified opinion.

### Other Matter

The financial statements of Literacy North Halton (o/a Adult Learning Centre) for the year ended March 31, 2020 were audited by another auditor who expressed a qualified opinion on those financial statement on June 8, 2020.

### Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.







In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

### Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standards (CASs), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether
  due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and
  obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The
  risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one
  resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions,
  misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit
  procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing
  an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

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CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS



We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

June 8, 2021 Burlington, Ontario

SB Partners LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants Licensed Public Accountants



**Literacy North Halton** 

(o/a Adult Learning Centre)

**Statement of Financial Position** 

March 31, 2021

Current assets Cash and bank Restricted cash - programming and relocation reserve funds Short-term investments Prepaids and deposits H.S.T. recoverable  Liabilities  Current liabilities	\$	72,162 24,920 31,024 2,144 2,729 132,979	\$ \$	2020 Note 10) 6,129 25,247 30,580 1,822 2,526
Cash and bank Restricted cash - programming and relocation reserve funds Short-term investments Prepaids and deposits H.S.T. recoverable  Liabilities  Current liabilities		24,920 31,024 2,144 2,729	· 	25,247 30,580 1,822 2,526
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Prepaids and deposits H.S.T. recoverable  Liabilities  Current liabilities	\$	2,144 2,729	\$	1,822 2,526
H.S.T. recoverable  Liabilities  Current liabilities	\$	2,729	\$	2,526
Liabilities Current liabilities	\$	•	\$	•
Current liabilities	\$	132,979	\$	66,304
Current liabilities				
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$	7,540	Ś	5,700
Deferred contributions (Note 5)	•	71,882	*	400
	\$	79,422	\$	6,100
Fund Balances				
Unrestricted				
Operating fund	\$	(2,387)	\$	4,705
Internally restricted				
Programming reserve fund		20,941		20,941
Relocation reserve fund		3,979		3,979
Contractual obligations reserve fund		23,028		22,698
Succession planning reserve fund		7,996		7,881
		53,557		60,204
			Ś	66,304

Approved on Behalf of the Board

Director

Director

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.





Literacy North Halton (o/a Adult Learning Centre) Statement of Operations Year Ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020 (Note 10)
Revenue		
Provincial funding - Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills		
Development (Note 5)	\$ 268,219	\$ 247,682
Donations and fundraising	31,608	29,968
Other revenue	1,777	3,550
Memberships	34	210
Interest and other income	449	2,180
	302,087	283,590
Expenditures		
Wages and benefits	220,066	202,419
Rent	32,502	30,881
Sheridan contract	12,500	12,500
Professional fees	10,641	9,179
Computer expense	7,014	6,000
Office and classroom supplies	6,959	6,562
Outreach	6,266	7,693
Telephone and Internet	4,282	3,596
Resource material	3,597	4,209
Insurance	3,258	2,977
Travel	712	2,947
Fundraising	470	884
Interest and bank charges	467	618
	308,734	290,465
Loss before program development costs	(6,647)	(6,875)
Program development project costs	-	(7,898)
Deficiency of expenditures over revenues for the year	\$ (6,647)	\$ (14,773)

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.





### Adult Tutoring - Essential & Digital Literacy Programs funded by:

- Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development\*
- United Way Halton and Hamilton

### Sheridan College ACE Academic Upgrading Program funded by:

Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development\*

### **MAIN DONORS & SPONSORS**

- Maple Lodge Farms Foundation
- Retired Womens Teachers of Ontario Lydia Snow Branch
- St. Alban the Martyr Anglican Church

### **SUPPORTERS**

- Denise Dilbey
- Kevin Campbell
- Walter & Penny Sopinka Family Trust
- Ami Gopal
- Bruce Catoen
- Amanda Armstrong
- Dave and Dale Cox
- David Barnsdale

- Jeff Sutherland
- Jennifer McAleer
- Katherine Joss
- Ryan Martic
- Stacie Sopinka
- Syed Hussain
- I.O.D.E. John Milton Chapter



We are grateful to the many businesses, community organizations and individuals who provided donations, pledges, and material support. Your contributions are critical to our operation and greatly appreciated.









Improving lives locally

\*These Employment Ontario programs are funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario, and through the Canada-Ontario Job Fund Agreement.

# Volunteers



Volunteer Tutor teaching CSW2 class during COVID-19

Thank you to our many volunteers who have given their valuable time, expertise, and effort to support our programming and adult learners over the past year. They continue to serve our organization in diverse ways.

- Board Members
- Volunteer Tutors
- Office Volunteers
- Fundraising Volunteers
- Poster Outreach
- Special Events

# **ALNH.ca/volunteers**

# Service Delivery Partners

We collaborate with the following partners to deliver programs and services in the communities of Georgetown, Milton and Acton. Their continued support and referrals are greatly appreciated.

- Centre for Skills Development Employment Services
- Centre for Skills Development Immigrant Services
- EO Peel-Halton-Dufferin Adult Learning Network
- EO Technology Support Organization, AlphaPlus
- Halton Hills Public Libraries
- HCDSB Thomas Merton Adult & Continuing Ed
- HDSB Gary Allan High School Adult & Continuing Ed
- Knox Presbyterian Church, Milton



WEBINAR Presented: Program options for High School Equivalency



Financial Literacy for Newcomers-in partnership with HHPL

- Milton Public Libraries
- ODSP (Ontario Disability Support Program)
- Ontario Works Halton Region
- Sheridan College Continuing & Professional Studies
- STRIDE Supported Training & Rehabilitation
- VPI Working Solutions, Georgetown
- WSIB (Workplace Safety and Insurance Board)

# Community Connections

Our community connections provide in-kind or other support for our work.

- Georgetown Independent
- Milton Canadian Champion
- Sherwood Print and Copy
- Town of Halton Hills
- Tyler Transport
- Your Local Coffee News Inc.

### Proud Members of:

- Chamber of Commerce Halton Hills
- Chamber of Commerce Milton
- Community Literacy Ontario
- Community Development Halton/Volunteer Halton



Online BINGO Fundraiser

# Find Us Online ALNH.CA





**Adult Learning North Halton** 

Contact Us

alnh.ca/about-us/contact-us/