

NWT Literacy Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013



Who We Are

The NWT Literacy Council is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting and supporting literacy and essential skills development in all the official languages of the NWT.



Our Board Members

- Cate Sills, President
- Bette Lyons, Vice President
- Jeri Miltenberger, Treasurer
- Suzanne Robinson, Secretary
- Emma Amundson, Deh Cho
- Bev Garven, Beaufort Delta (missing from photo)
- Rachel Gauthier, Yellowknife, Dettah and Ndilo (missing from photo)
- Lisa Mackenzie Nitsiza, Tłı̨chǫ
- Amy Ryan, South Slave
- Mary Anne Vital, Sahtu

Our Staff

- Helen Balanoff, Executive Director
- Kathryn Barry Paddock, Family and Community Literacy Coordinator
- Marianne Bromley, Literacy Coordinator
- Cheryl Deforest, Office Manager
- Patricia Ilgok, Family and Community Literacy Coordinator
- Katie Randall, Youth and Adult Services
- David Buchanan, Literacy Coordinator (part-time)



Message from the President

As many of you know, I was the Executive Director of the NWT Literacy Council for many years. Now as the Council's President, it's exciting for me to see how much the Council has grown. For several years, we've had reliable and consistent funding, which has allowed us to expand our services into much needed areas like youth literacy and financial literacy. We're also able to produce more professional-looking resources, and we've updated our look, including a new logo, which I really like.

2012-2013 was an exciting year. In April, the trip with elders from Cambridge Bay and Ulukhaktok to the British Museum finally took place after lengthy preparations. Everyone who went says it was an amazing experience, as they examined and talked about Inuinnaït objects from the 1850s. Watch for the website we're developing about this trip.

In October, we hosted the pan-northern gathering on skill development, *Made in the North*. It was a huge success! We were honoured to have well-known northerner, Paul Andrew, as a keynote speaker. Paul talked about the importance of humility as an essential skill for northern life. The many transformative projects that were featured in workshops included Dechinta Bush University (NWT), the Miqqut program (Nunavut) and the Learning Circles project (Yukon). The forum concluded with the message, "We're MAKING it in the North!" We owe a huge thanks to the working committee (Judy Cavanagh, the project manager, Cayla Chenier and Anna Ziegler from Nunavut,

Jeanine O'Connell from the Yukon and Darlene Mandeville from the NWT), who shaped the forum and made it happen.

This was also the year of the Mongol Rally for Literacy. When a young man walks into the office and says he's going to drive half way around the world to raise funds for a charity and you are his charity of choice, it's pretty special. Lachlan MacLean from Yellowknife did just that! He drove from London, England, to Ulan Bator in Mongolia, sponsoring the trip himself. Lachlan had six weeks of adventures along the way, and raised \$19,000 for youth literacy projects. BHP Billiton, the company he works for, then matched this amount. Thank you, Lachlan – your spirit of adventure and giving inspired us all. And thank you to BHP Billiton for encouraging their employees to support charitable organizations like ours.

We are only able to do what we do as a result of the hard work of our staff, the dedication of our board members and the strong support of our funders, sponsors and individual community members. Literacy and essential skill development is a long-term endeavour that needs everyone's involvement. Thank you all for your ongoing support.

Cate Sills, President

New Literacy and Essential Skills Resources

Last year we were busy creating new resources.

Family Literacy Resources

- *Storytime Adventures*
- *Little Chefs*
- *Science Fun*
- *Recipes for Fun*
- *Polar Bear Son Story Sack*

Youth and Adult Resources

- *Silent Words Novel Study*
- *Career-Life-Work Series Resource Materials* (4 instructor manuals and 6 workbooks)
- *Factors that Facilitate Adult Learner Success in the NWT*
- *Lifelong Learning – It’s a Trip How to Kit*
- *Rally for Literacy How to Kit*
- *Financial Literacy Resource Materials*

We also developed **new curriculum documents** for Adult Literacy and Basic Education programs for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment:

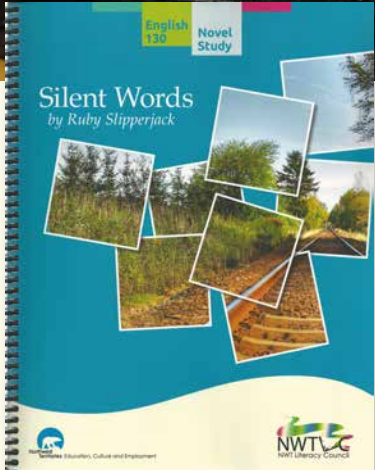
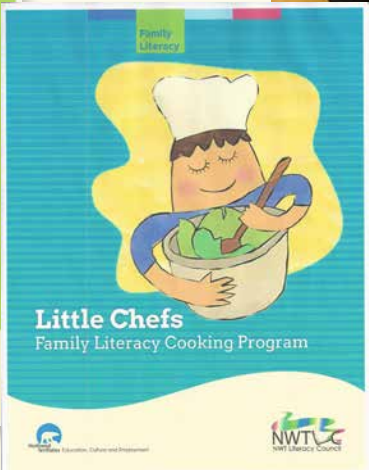
- Career, Life, Work 120-130
- Academic and Personal Success 140
- Social Studies 140
- Financial Literacy

We developed drafts of **new courses for Aurora College’s** Adult Literacy and Basic Education programs:

- An Introduction to ALBE programs
- An Introduction to Office Administration (short skills-based program)
- An Introduction to Starting Your Own Business (short skills-based program)

We also reprinted many family literacy resources for our baby bags and backpacks, and for the baby bags that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment distributed as part of the Early Childhood initiative.

We had over 7 million downloads of our resources from our website in 2012-2013.



Family and Community Literacy

Family Projects

We offered a broad range of supports (training, resources, outreach and mentoring) to community-based family literacy projects. This year we funded and supported 28 family literacy projects in 18 communities through our funding from the GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment. This year we also re-introduced our Family Tutoring program for parents of school-aged children. We completed sending out our first batches of backpacks and baby bags and developed new Let's Start Early baby bags, which are distributed through the Yellowknife and Inuvik hospitals and the Fort Smith midwives.

Projects included:

- Storytelling
- Story Sacks
- Reading Circles
- Books in the Home
- Parenting Sessions
- Music Pups
- Little Chefs
- Family Literacy Nights
- Tasty Tuesdays
- 1-2-3 Rhyme with Me
- Resource Development (Aboriginal Languages)
- Reading Rascals
- Family Tutoring
- Literacy on the Land

Community Training

We offered training in family literacy, early literacy for early childhood educators, youth and adult literacy and essential skills, digital literacy and financial literacy.



Family and Community Literacy (continued)

- Community Projects
- Community Training and Outreach



Youth and Adult Literacy

Our emphasis this year was on our pan-northern youth literacy pilot project. We had several team meetings to more precisely define the project and the types of projects we would support. We have also had a strong focus on financial literacy.



Research

After years of planning, the day finally came! In April, elders and researchers from Cambridge Bay and Ulukhaktok, our academic researcher Dr. Cynthia Chambers, curator Joanne Bird from the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, our videographer, David Stewart from the Inuvialuit Communications Society, and Helen and Jeremy from the Council travelled to the British Museum in London.

The British Museum has the largest collection of Inuinnait objects in the world. The elders selected the objects they wanted to see, and then discussed them in great detail and told stories about them as they looked and handled the objects.

We were particularly excited about the 'sleeping words' they 'woke up' – words that the elders had heard as children, but had forgotten. The objects that created the most excitement were a dance hat, dance shoes and bows. All of the objects will be on display on our new website about the visit in the Fall.

We are very grateful to the British Museum staff for their patience and helpfulness, and to the staff person at the Canada Passport Office in Edmonton, who facilitated us getting a much-needed passport for Adam Kudlak the day before we left.

Our other current research project is the Northern Men's research project – a pan-northern initiative led by the Ilitagsiniq-Nunavut Literacy Council. We are looking at men's engagement in learning and work across the North.



Made in the North Forum on Skill Development

The praise for *Made in the North* from participants was unanimous; it was an exceptional forum. Words used to describe the event included “powerful, respectful, exciting, life-changing, inspiring, collaborative, well-organized, awesome, and moving.” One of the forum organizers heard the best compliment from a participant: “The conference was so good I wasn’t even homesick.”

Participants identified their top outcomes in order of importance as: 1) the opportunity to network with others; 2) being able to identify and share effective practices for the North; 3) being able to identify, share and problem solve around shared challenges and solutions across the territories. This was some of the feedback in the evaluation report for the forum.

People were extremely engaged in the event: from the opening reception with NWT Commissioner, George Tuccaro, NWT Premier, Bob McLeod, and Education, Culture and

Employment Minister, Jackson Lafferty, the morning prayer song by the Yellowknives Dene Drummers, the keynote address by Paul Andrew, the workshops and conversations, the hands-on experiential learning sessions, to the community feast in Dettah with cultural activities from all three territories. The forum was truly ‘Made in the North’.



Promotion and Information Sharing

Annually, we build a strong network of support as we promote and provide information about literacy and essential skills.

Promotional Events

- International Adult Learners' Week
- De Beers Books in Homes Partnership
- National Aboriginal Day
- Canada Day Celebrations
- City of Yellowknife Garden Parties
- Northern Territories Federation of Labour – Labour Day Barbecue
- International Literacy Day Breakfast with Yellowknife Book Cellar
- NWT Literacy Week (including Read for 15)
- National Family Literacy Day
- Aboriginal Languages Month

Information Sharing

- *Literacy Matters* newsletters three times a year
- Weekly e-news to almost 700 subscribers
- Regularly updated website, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages
- Resource library
- Literacy calendar and other materials and resources mailed to educators and communities



Committee Membership and Intergovernmental Relationships

We had representatives on the following committees or participated in these consultations:

- The Action Plan Committee for the Adult Literacy and Basic Education Review
- The GNWT Anti-Poverty Roundtables
- Learning Supports for People with Disabilities Committee
- NWT Literacy Strategy Advisory Committee
- North Slave Regional Training Partnership
- Provincial/Territorial Committee of the Canadian Literacy and Learning Network

- National Adult Literacy Database Board
- Early Childhood Framework for Action Roundtable
- Education Renewal Roundtable

We also provided submissions to the GNWT Anti-Poverty Strategy, the Government of Canada budget consultation, and the GNWT Economic Opportunities Strategy.

Thank You to Our Literacy Friends

The Board of the NWT Literacy Council thanks all of the people who support our work. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without you.

Funders

- Government of the Northwest Territories – Education, Culture and Employment
- Government of the Northwest Territories – Health and Social Services
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (Office of Literacy and Essential Skills)
- SEDI, TD Financial Literacy Grant Fund
- Aurora College

Corporate Sponsors and Donors

- First Air
- BHP Billiton
- Conoco Phillips
- De Beers Canada Inc.
- Enbridge
- Lutra Associates
- Nasittuq
- Northwestel
- Wesclean
- Yellowknife Book Cellar

Individual Donors and Donations In-Kind

- Regina Pfeifer
- Rosemary and Donald Von Schilling
- Jennifer Waterhouse

Thank You to Our Literacy Friends: Mongol Rally for Literacy

As you read in the President’s message, Lachlan McLean drove over 12,000 kms across Europe and Asia to raise funds for youth literacy in the NWT. Lachlan had an amazing group of supporters. Thank you to all of you! And a big thank you to Pam Petten, former Yellowknifer, who met Lachlan in Ulan Bator!

Boris Atamanenko	Paul Falvo	Sandra Malcolm
Emma Amundson	Beverly Garven	Amanda Mallon
Anonymous Donors	Rachel Gauthier	Troylana Manson
Paul Bailey	Jean Guinea	Ryan McCord
Helen Balanoff	Kate Guay	Robert McLeod
Kathryn Barry Paddock	Peggy Anne Gurney	Geraldine Miltenberger
Black Knight	John Halcyon Styn	Don Pittman
Robert Bouchard	Patricia Ilgok	Katie Randall
Aggie Brockman	Kingland Ford	Suzanne Robinson
Marianne Bromley	Kevin Jackson	Ursula Ross
Bromley and Sons	Christopher Juliano	Thomas Scaria
Penny Cameron	Barbara King	Neal Squire
Lisa Campbell	Edwin Lake	Therese Stevens
Floyd/Rudy Collins	Bette Lyons	Tom Waits Tribute participants
Co-operators Foundation	Larry Linnick	Christine Wenman
Lorne Decker	Caihla MacClush	Norman Yakeleya
Lorna Deveau	Lisa Mackenzie Nitsiza	Yellowknife lunch crowd
Daryl Dolynny	Ian MacLean	Zumbathon participants

Donors to the Mongol Rally during 2011-2012 included Darcy Milkowski, Finning Canada and Jill Watier.





Box 761
5122 - 48th Street
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2N6
Canada

Telephone: (867) 873-9262
Toll Free in NWT: 1-866-599-6758
Fax: (867) 873-2176
E-mail: nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca
Web Site: www.nwt.literacy.ca