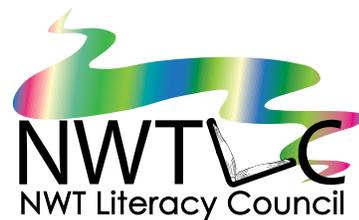


# Literacy Matters



SUMMER 2013



## Learning to Grow Food

Farm Institute is practical and hands-on

Jackie Milne has a vision. She sees gardens in every Northwest Territories' community. She sees northerners growing and raising their own food, contributing to community well-being and economic development.

She sees local mentors with the knowledge and skills to teach others about gardening. She sees northern farmers making a living doing what they love. A commercial farmer herself, Jackie knows how to grow things: her vision has produced the Northern Farm Training Institute.

The Institute is a series of workshops developed by Jackie and Susie Wegernoski, a Community Adult Educator. Starting in April, for three days once a month, 15 students from throughout the NWT gathered in Hay River to learn how to farm. The workshops continue until September, following the stages of the growing cycle, from selecting seeds and starting seedlings, to harvesting and storing the food that is grown.

Students learn which vegetables to grow in the north; how to design, prepare, plant, and maintain a family or

...continued on pg 14

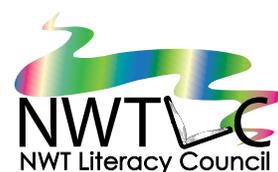
## In this Issue...

Core Funding Cut Balanced by Support in the NWT.....2  
We're Researching Men's Learning and Work Experiences ..... 3  
NWT Indigenous Language Workers Go Back to School..... 4

Expanding our Family Literacy Skills and Networks .....5  
People Love Our Everyday Math Skills Series ..... 6  
Delivering Family Literacy Training in Fort Providence .....7

Little You Book Launch a Big Success ..... 8  
Bringing Young People Back to Learning..... 9  
Sharing Information About Money ..... 11

Great Photos Submitted for Adult Learners' Week Contest ..... 12  
Check Out Our Resources! ..... 13



# Core Funding Cut Balanced by Support in the NWT

## President's Message: Cate Sills

The last few months have been trying ones for us at the Literacy Council.

We learned this spring that the national Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES) will stop core funding us, and all the other provincial/territorial literacy coalitions after June 2014. OLES wants to create a new network of organizations to focus more strongly on labour market outcomes.

The good news is that we are building on our collaborations with our northern neighbours. The three northern literacy coalitions in the Yukon, NWT and Nunavut developed a joint proposal to represent northern interests on the new network. Thank you to the broad range of organizations across the north that supported our proposal. We're keeping our fingers crossed that we will be successful.

The NWT Literacy Council is fortunate to have ongoing funding and strong support from the NWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment for our family literacy project, our adult literacy supports project, and our Ulukhaktok literacies research. We also value the support from our other funders, in particular Aurora College and our primary corporate sponsors, First Air,

Northwestel and the Yellowknife BookCellar.

We believe literacy organizations play an important role in society and must continue to exist and be supported. Literacy is about improving labour market outcomes, but it's about more than that: it's about social justice.

Literacy is the foundational skill that promotes equality of opportunity and enables people to reach their potential. Literacy is strongly associated with wellness and good health, poverty and crime reduction, and the learning and prosperity of future generations. It's not only a key factor in individual prosperity, it also contributes to economic development, community development and social cohesiveness.

The Government of the NWT recently released several key documents, which reflect the important role that literacy plays. We are pleased that our family literacy work is valued in the new Early Childhood Framework, Right from the Start, and that people want to see our family literacy program continue. Literacy also features in the Elimination of Poverty Framework and the NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy report, although perhaps not as strongly as we would have liked.



We are encouraged to see that these and other recent government documents spell out the need to provide better financial support for adult learners who wish to upgrade their skills. For many years, we advocated for greater financial support for adult learners as a matter of social justice.

So, there are positive signs at the territorial level to balance the narrowing federal focus on literacy. We will keep you posted on the status of our pan-northern proposal. Whatever the outcome, we plan to continue to keep literacy front and centre, and to move the cause of literacy forward in the NWT.

# Mark Your Calendar Now!

## NWT Literacy Council Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting will be Saturday, **September 7** at noon in the Commissioner's Room at the Days Inn on Franklin Avenue in Yellowknife. We will review our audited financial statements. We will also have an election for Vice-President and Treasurer.

Everyone is welcome!

## NWT Literacy Week 2013

NWT Literacy Week 2013 is **September 22-28**. The theme this year is ***Finding Your Way – Financially***. The theme acknowledges the importance of having the information you need to make money decisions that fit with your goals and values.

## International Plain Language Day

**October 13** is International Plain Language Day. This day brings attention to the need and demand for clearer communications. Plain language means putting readers first. Contact us for more information about our plain language design, writing and editing service.

## Sign Up for Our E-news

Keep up to date on trends, events, funding sources, research, news and resources. It's not just for literacy workers!

Sign up for ***This Week in Literacy***.

Go to [www.nwt.literacy.ca](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca) and enter your email address on our home page.



## We're Researching Men's Learning and Work Experiences

What makes people want to go back to school for more education? What helps people find and keep a job? Those are two questions we're asking in a new research project, specifically directed towards northern men.

The Nunavut Literacy Council is leading this project, with the NWT Literacy Council, the Yukon Literacy Coalition and Literacy Newfoundland and Labrador as partners. Dr. Shelley Tulloch, from Nunavut, is the lead researcher. She helped shape the research and is training community-based researchers to carry out the research and analyze the findings.

Here in the NWT, we are very lucky to have hired two enthusiastic community-based researchers to work on the project. Our researchers attended two training and information sessions, one in Ottawa and one in Toronto. They met with Shelley, community researchers from the other regions and staff from the different literacy coalitions.

The researchers worked with community members to identify key people in each community to interview. Through these in-depth interviews, men are telling us stories about their learning and work experiences. Later in the fall, the researchers will do more general community surveys to give us a broader picture of men's experiences.

This is an exciting project. It is building research capacity within northern communities, and giving all the partners useful information for their programs so they can better meet the learning and work needs of northern men.

NWT Indigenous Language Workers Go

# Back to School



While most of us were kicking back and relaxing this summer, the people working to preserve, promote, revitalize and teach NWT Aboriginal languages were studying. This group of dedicated language workers now has more options for professional development.

Six NWT Aboriginal language advocates are working on their Master's degrees in Indigenous Language Revitalization at the University of Victoria.

Margaret Erasmus, Lucy Lafferty, Rosa Mantla, Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault, Fibbie Tatti and Laura Tutcho completed step one, achieving graduate diplomas in the program this spring. They are each working on a project or thesis and hope to complete their Master's degrees in another year.

These women have worked for years in one or more roles promoting, preserving and protecting their language and culture. Collectively they have years of experience in teaching, developing curriculum, teaching and learning materials, interpreting,

translating and with advocacy, as well as program and policy development.

Entering a Master's program last July was a big challenge for someone like Rosa Mantla, who did not have a Bachelor's degree. "Sometimes I struggle with reading articles, writing and how to put some things in English terms, but with encouragement and support, everything falls into place," says Rosa.

The program has 26 students from across Canada and around the world. The NWT students bring a unique perspective to the program because their languages are stronger than many indigenous languages. They also have the recognition and backing of the NWT Official Languages Act.

“They are a strong and powerful network of people doing similar work,” says Dr. Lorna Williams, founding director of Indigenous Education at the University of Victoria, of the students in the Master’s program which began just last year.

For Laura Tutcho, the Master’s program “was a great opportunity. It is giving me an avenue to think about how to revitalize our languages, what language revitalization is, and how to apply what we are learning to the north,” says Laura. “It gives me the strength and back-up to advocate, and other advocates to rely on.”

Other NWT language activists are studying at the University of Alberta as part of its Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute. Mary Rose Sundberg, of the Goyatiko Language Centre in Dettah, is one of those students. She has been studying for several summers in Edmonton to complete her Community Linguist Certificate.

“It has given me the confidence to enjoy teaching others. That’s the fun part.” Mary Rose says she has learned more about verbs and grammar and improved her interpreting skills by taking certificate courses over the years. “The things we learn now about technology will make our lives easier. It will make a big difference in the work we do.”

Fourteen students participated in the 2013 NWT Aboriginal Languages Summer Institute in Yellowknife. The two-week program was taught by Andy Norwegian, of Fort Simpson, and Maxine Baptiste, of the Okanagan First Nation. It was a partnership between the Government of the Northwest Territories, University of Victoria and the En’owkin Centre in Penticton. The two courses delivered this summer contribute toward a Certificate in Aboriginal Language Revitalization.

Congratulations to all the NWT language activists and champions who are increasing their knowledge and skills in order to strengthen Aboriginal languages in our communities.



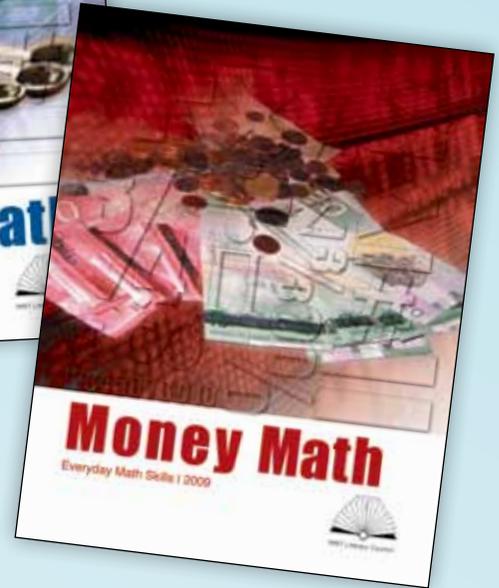
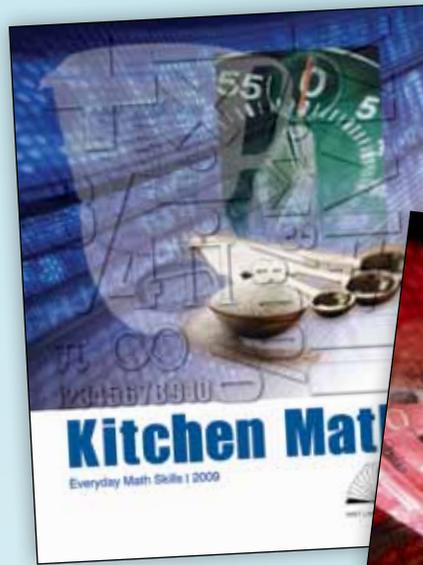
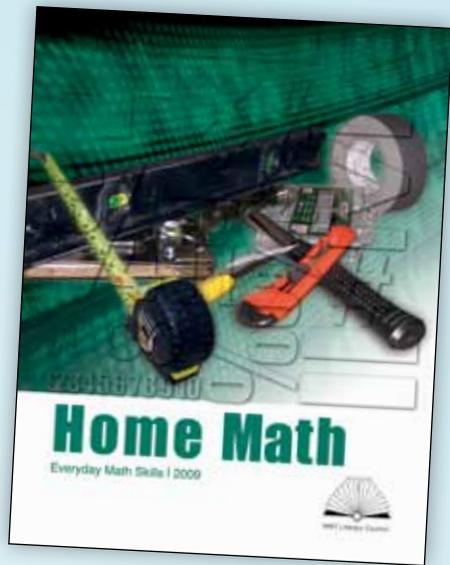
## Expanding Our Family Literacy Skills and Networks

The Centre for Family Literacy’s Training Institute took place May 6–10, 2013 in Edmonton. The NWT Literacy Council was happy to be able to take part. Sonya Manuel, Librarian in Fort Good Hope, and Delma Klengenberg, Family Literacy Coordinator for Ulukhaktok, joined Pat and Kathryn from our staff.

Since Delma and Sonia had never been at this event before, they attended the Introduction to Family Literacy sessions to learn the basics of family literacy. They then went to some fun workshops like Storysacks, Books for Babies and Rhymes that Bind. Kathryn and Pat attended sessions on supporting language and literacy in child care settings, Beyond the Basics – Books for Babies, Magic Carpet Ride and B.O.O.K.S (Books Offer Our Kids Success).

The training was a great opportunity to network with family literacy providers in Alberta, share ideas and get energized to start programming in September. Each year we try to attend the training, and take NWT family literacy providers with us who would benefit from broader training. To date, we’ve had participants take part in this training from Inuvik, Deline, Whatì, Enterprise, Fort Providence, Fort Good Hope, Ulukhaktok, Ndilo and Dettah.





# People Love Our Everyday Math Skills Series

Our Everyday Math Skills workbooks continue to be our most popular resources. *Kitchen Math*, *Money Math*, *Home Math* and *Simply Math* can be downloaded at [www.nwt.literacy.ca/adultlit\\_res.htm](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/adultlit_res.htm)

**Here's an email we received from Texas!**

*Hello,*

*I develop materials for Texas Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) teachers. I was asked to present at a state professional development conference on the topic of incorporating math into FCS classes. While assembling additional resources to share with the teachers, I came across your Everyday Math Skills materials. They are great. Please share with the authors my congratulations on putting together such an excellent resource.*

*Thank you for making these workbooks readily available. I know they were developed in 2009, but please leave these up on your site. Good math resources are hard to find.*

*Sincerely,*

*Arlene Spearman*

Closer to home, we're excited that Mount Royal University in Calgary has purchased copies of *Kitchen Math* and *Money Math* to use as text books in its Transitional Vocational Program.

Look for yourself to find out why people love these Everyday Math Skills workbooks!



# Delivering Family Literacy Training in Fort Providence

Kathryn, one of our family literacy coordinators, travelled to Fort Providence in May to deliver family literacy training to staff at the Aboriginal Head Start program there. Seven participants attended, including a staff member from the Friendship Centre and a community member.

The training included an introduction to family literacy, the 1-2-3 Rhyme with Me program, how to choose books, how to run a family literacy night, the Story Time Adventures program, as well as Storysacks and felt story creation.

The Storysacks program shows participants how to make props for children's story books. These

props help to draw children into the book, and may include things such as: soft toys of the main characters, scenery relating to the story, a non-fiction book that links to the story, an audio recording of the story, a language game based on the book and a "prompt" card that gives parents and educators ideas to develop children's listening and comprehension skills.

We can't wait to see what great Storysacks are created with local legends and stories from the Deh Cho region! The Healthy Children's Initiative for the Deh Cho region funded this family literacy training.



# Upcoming Training

Mark your calendar for the 2013 **Family Literacy Training Institute!** This will take place during the week of **December 2- 6, 2013** at Northern United Place in Yellowknife. As always, be prepared for a week of interactive learning and hands-on fun!

Workshop topics will include *An Introduction to Family Literacy* (including the importance of play), *Choosing Books*, *Story Time Adventures*, *Family Literacy Nights and Other Ideas*, and *1-2-3 Rhyme with Me*.

We will hold **Proposal Writing and Facilitation Skills** workshops this fall and winter in Fort Resolution (September 18-20) and Yellowknife (November 26-28). Our dates for Fort Simpson are not yet confirmed.

Contact us to get more information or register for training. The Family Literacy Training Institute registration form is online at [www.nwt.literacy.ca](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca)

## Little You Book Launch a Big Success

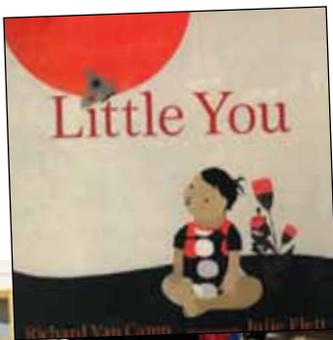
More than 55 babies and their parents / caregivers attended the launch of the baby book, *Little You*. NWT Literacy Council and celebrated NWT author

Richard Van Camp launched the book May 30 at the Baker Centre in Yellowknife.

*Little You*, a book about your little baby, will be

given to all babies born across the territory in 2013. This program is a partnership between Richard, the Literacy Council, the Yellowknife BookCellar and Orca Book Publishers.

Richard entertained the crowd with some storytelling. He then signed copies of his books for all of the children in attendance. The Literacy Council recorded Richard reading the story, which will be given out on CD with every book.



Literacy Matters | Summer 2013



[www.nwt.literacy.ca](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca)

## Our New Website Coming This Fall

Our new website will be online in the next month or so. It's been a big job because we have so many resources and other information to include. We'll be anxious to hear from you about what you think of our new look! Here's a sneak preview.



## Apply for Family Literacy Funding

We fund Family Literacy activities and projects in NWT communities. The application form and criteria are on our website [www.nwt.literacy.ca/familit\\_funding.htm](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/familit_funding.htm) or you can contact Pat at [pat@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:pat@nwtliteracy.ca) or 1-866-599-6758 for information.

# Bringing Young People Back to Learning



We hear often that our young people are our future. Yet many young people leave school early and miss out on the opportunities that the NWT has to offer because they haven't developed some of the skills they need.

The NWT Literacy Council has an innovative pilot project to try to find ways to bring young people back into learning. This is a joint project with the Nunavut Literacy Council, the Yukon Literacy Coalition and Literacy Newfoundland and Labrador.

We're trying to find out what motivates young people to take part in learning activities, and then find ways to integrate literacy and essential skills into that learning situation.

At our project team meeting in Edmonton, we visited two great youth programs, iHuman, which focuses on art and YESS (Youth Empowerment and Support Services) which focuses on meeting youth's basic needs and preparing them for work. Each program is very different, but both are effective in their own way. Both have lots of youth involved.

They told us they think the essential elements for youth engagement (and this is supported by research) are: meeting young people's basic needs; programs that are relevant and meaningful to young people; opportunities for youth to create connections and develop positive relationships; space that youth can call their own; and, learning embedded into programs, rather than formal learning programs.

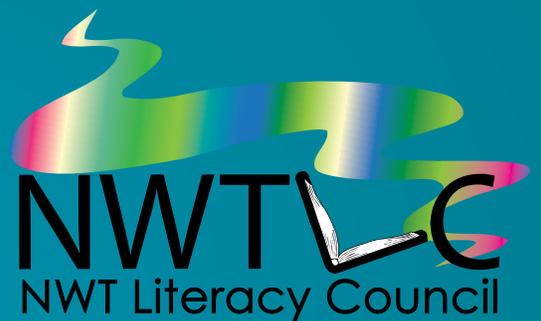
We have one pilot site underway. In the Yukon, we're working with young people who are taking part in a fish camp. They'll be learning a broad range of skills that include working together as a team, developing a storyboard outline and flowchart for a video about the camp, shooting and producing a video, and, doing background research by reading about Yukon River salmon and the Yukon River Salmon Agreement, for example.

In the NWT, we're still exploring possible pilot sites and topics with several communities. We hope to firm these up for the Fall.

# FINDING YOUR WAY FINANCIALLY



Contact us about financial literacy workshops at:  
[nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca) | [www.nwt.literacy.ca](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca)



[www.nwt.literacy.ca](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca)

# Sharing Information

# About Money



Our financial literacy workshop team was in Fort Smith in early June. Katie and Aggie delivered one-day workshops to the male and then the female inmates from the Fort Smith Correctional Complex.

In the evenings we delivered sessions at Tapwe House for parents and grandparents of young children. People tell us our information and resources are helpful. At the same time we continue to learn from our workshop participants.

For example, we have been dismayed to find out that few parents know about a national program that provides low-income families with money to encourage them to save for their childrens' post-secondary education.

The **Canada Learning Bond** is available for children born after December 31, 2003 and if their parents receive the National Child Benefit Supplement (net income is \$43,561 or less). Up to \$2,000 for each child is available by age 15 to be put

into a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP). The only catch is the money has to be spent on post-secondary education.

To set up an RESP, you have to apply in person at a bank or other RESP provider. That is a real barrier for people from small communities. It may be one reason why only 8% of the eligible children in the NWT are receiving the Canada Learning Bond!

People can find out more at [www.smartsaver.org](http://www.smartsaver.org) and [www.canlearn.ca](http://www.canlearn.ca)

Please let us know if you would like a financial literacy workshop for your community, workplace or organization. We are booking dates for the late fall and winter. Contact Katie Randall at [katie@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:katie@nwtliteracy.ca) or 1-866-599-6758.



# Great Photos Submitted for Adult Learners' Week Contest

**Thank you to everyone who entered our Adult Learners' Week Photo Contest in April.**

We had lots of entries on Facebook. People told us they learn from a variety of sources, including elders and little children.

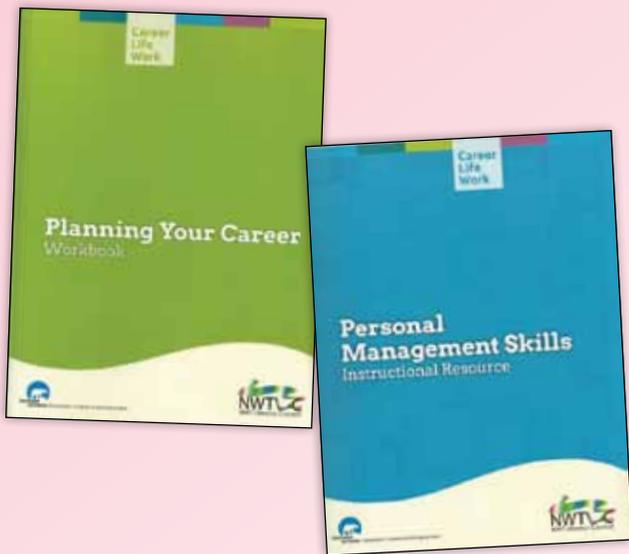
Brenda Bouvier wrote: "My kids. They teach me something everyday. Patience, unconditional love, the importance of a routine, the importance of spontaneity. We learn new things together all the time."

Lyla Pierre wrote: "Our elder, my father, our grandpa he shows his grand kids so many things."

Bill Jenkins wrote: "Living and working in Gamètì, NT, I have learned so much about the Tłı̨chǫ way of life."

We had a draw from all the entries. Charlotte Babicki, of Yellowknife, won a Kobo Mini e-reader. Charlotte is a former NWT Literacy Council board member and continues to be one of our valued supporters.

# Check Out Our Resources!

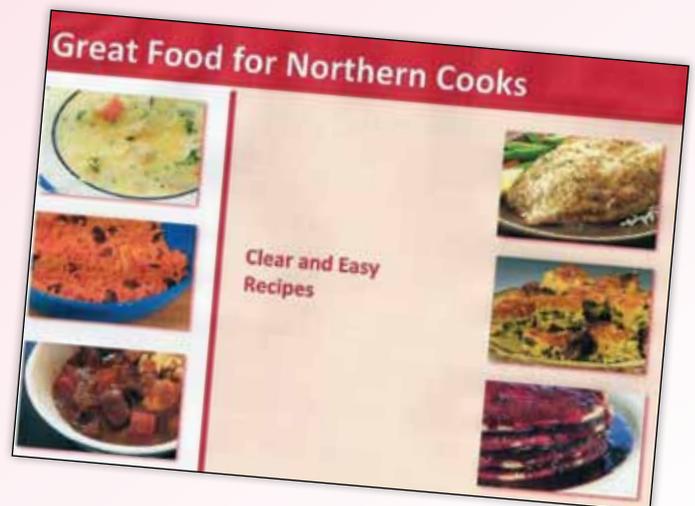


## Career-Life-Work

*Career-Life-Work* is a series of 10 job readiness resources for 120-130 Adult Literacy and Basic Education Courses. It includes four instructor manuals on Personal Management Skills, Communication Skills, Career Development Skills, Job Success Strategies and six accompanying workbooks

## Great Food for Northern Cooks

*Great Food for Northern Cooks* is a joint project of Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority, the NWT Literacy Council and the NWT/Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program. The cookbook has simple, nutritious recipes that use ingredients you can find in any NWT community.



Search for these new resources at  
[www.nwt.literacy.ca](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca)

# ...Learning to Grow Food

community garden; how to build fertile soil using what is available locally; and how to create a market for their produce. Other workshop topics include growing fruits, nuts, and berries; raising animals; harvesting wild food plants; proposal writing; and simple ways to start a small farm business.

Workshops include a mix of classroom learning and hands-on experience. At the sessions this spring, students were introduced to ideas, techniques, and strategies in the morning through presentations by instructors,

videos, written materials, and discussion.

In the afternoon, the class moved to different farms in Hay River where they literally got their hands dirty working with seeds, soil, compost, and plants. They put into practice what they learned in the classroom.

Students left the workshops with instructions and everything they needed to start growing, including 50 vegetable and herb seedlings, seeds, tools, a mini-greenhouse, organic fertilizers, and berry bushes.

This combination of classroom and hands-on

learning makes the Institute a unique and successful program. When asked what they liked best, nearly every student mentioned their experiences working in the garden. One student's reply—"Hands on is the way"—summarized everyone's feelings.

The Institute is made for the north. Courses are led by experienced northern instructors, and workshops teach strategies that work for our northern climate, seasons, and growing environment. Workshops take place Friday through Sunday. Participants can attend individual workshops, or the series of six. All aspiring gardeners have equal opportunity to attend, as the Institute covers all expenses—travel, accommodations, food, and supplies. Within one month of advertising the program, there were 40 applications from communities in every region of the NWT, and a long waiting list.

The Institute is an example of non-formal, community-based learning, a learning model that seems appropriate for the north (see "Literacy Matters", April 2013). The NWT Literacy Council is supporting the Institute because learning to grow food together allows everyone—from kids to elders—to learn and practice skills essential to



daily life, work, and school. We also share its goals, “Empowering People, Strengthening Communities, Creating Sustainability.”

The students and instructors have become a close community, with a Facebook group page that keeps them connected and learning together between workshops. Throughout the summer, there were photos and descriptions of new greenhouses, planters, garden beds, and thriving vegetables, as everyone tried out their new knowledge and tools. Many students shared their new skills, offering workshops in their home community to help others to start growing vegetables.

Jackie wants to “create and share information that’s genuinely useful to practical people who want to grow food in the north.” Judging from evaluations, she and her team have been successful. When asked “what is the most important thing you learned?” students replied:

- “How to make a compost pile”
- “How to mix and build soil”
- “What vegetables work best in the north”
- “What minerals plants require”
- “How to grow better potatoes”
- “How to use various tools”
- “Where to go for information”

At each workshop wrap-up, students reported feeling energized, empowered, inspired, ready to share, ready to act. Several participants said the workshops changed their life, and perhaps even the world.

Summarizing his experience, one student said “This is knowledge you take for life, and it will be with you...”

The Northern Farm Training Institute is nurturing personal and community growth as well as a local food movement.



## Board of Directors

**Cate Sills**  
President

**Bette Lyons**  
Vice President

**Jeri Miltenberger**  
Treasurer

**Suzanne Robinson**  
Secretary

**Amy Ryan**  
South Slave

**Emma Amundson**  
Deh Cho

**Lisa Mackenzie Nitsiza**  
Tłıchǫ

**Mary Ann Vital**  
Sahtu

**Beverly Garven**  
Beaufort-Delta

**Rachel Gauthier**  
Yellowknife

## Staff

**Helen Balanoff**  
Executive Director  
[helen@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:helen@nwtliteracy.ca)

**Katie Randall**  
Coordinator, Youth  
and Adult Services  
[katie@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:katie@nwtliteracy.ca)

**Kathryn Barry Paddock**  
Family and Community  
Literacy Coordinator  
[kathryn@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:kathryn@nwtliteracy.ca)

**Marianne Bromley**  
Literacy Coordinator  
[marianne@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:marianne@nwtliteracy.ca)

**Patricia Ilgok**  
Family and Community  
Literacy Coordinator  
[pat@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:pat@nwtliteracy.ca)

**Cheryl DeForest**  
Office Manager  
[nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca)

# Become a Literacy Council Member

Literacy and essential skills touch all aspects of our lives.

Literacy and essential skills impact our social and economic well-being, our health, our families and our communities.

The NWT Literacy Council is committed to ensuring that all NWT residents have access to the literacy supports they need to:

- get jobs
- continue their education
- take care of their families
- participate fully in their communities

The NWT Literacy Council is a strong non-government literacy voice and service provider.

## Why become a member of the NWT Literacy Council?

A strong network is key to creating solutions that address the complex issues of literacy and essential skills.

Your support is important to us.

Join the Literacy Council and strengthen the voice of our network of literacy workers and supporters across the NWT.

Literacy is everyone's business!

## Yearly Dues

- Individual, \$10.00
- Family, \$20.00
- Organization, \$25.00

Membership dues can be waived on request, if necessary.

## Donate online

Donations are essential for the NWT Literacy Council's work.

You can donate online at the NWT Literacy Council website.

Go to [www.nwt.literacy.ca](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca). Just click on the CanadaHelps button on our home page.



It's easy and it's fast!



## We're on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube!

## Please search for NWT Literacy Council.

## Keep in Touch!



Box 761  
Yellowknife, NT  
X1A 2N6



(867) 873.9262  
Toll-free 1.866.599.6758  
Fax (867) 873.2176



[www.nwt.literacy.ca](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca)  
[nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca)

