



October 2006

Three Priority Areas of Literacy Partners of Manitoba

Literacy Partners puts our energies and the dollars from federal, provincial and foundation grants, and from fundraising and donations, into projects that deliver real results and services for the 290,000 working aged low literate Manitobans. Following are some of the highlights over the past two years (September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2006):

1) The services we provide to adult learners, literacy programs and other adult learning programs:

- recruited more than 100 volunteers to work in literacy programs as a result of articles we initiated in the Winnipeg Free Press;
- provided \$19,309.65 in bursaries to adult learners for prescription eyewear, childcare, transportation and school supplies (net proceeds from our annual fundraising event, the PGI (Peter Gzowski Invitational Golf Tournament), also support regional events for learners, operate the resource centre for their teachers, and contribute to the Literacy for Life Endowment Fund, an initiative of Literacy Partners with The Winnipeg Foundation and the Winnipeg Public Library);
- provided access to over 5,000 resources, from our literacy library, with free delivery anywhere in the province;
- hosted regional events, in rural Manitoba, for adult learners and family literacy programs with participation of the Lieutenant Governor and MLAs (supported by local businesses and organizations);
- a four day public speaking training and writing program for adult learners, who then participate in our Learner Speakers' Bureau, speaking at government, community organization and literacy events and/or meetings (funded by Adult Learning and Literacy, a branch of Manitoba's Advanced Education and Literacy Department);
- regional reps (three 15 hour per week positions) in rural and northern Manitoba to support learners and programs by providing service and acting as a liaisons to Literacy Partners.

2) The leveraging of resources across Manitoba to support learners and programs:

- partnered with CanWest's Raise-a-Reader program and distributed \$17,000 to family literacy programs in 2006 (\$73,000 plus over 4 years);
- worked with CanWest Raise-a-Reader and public libraries to collect and distribute books to local and regional literacy programs during I Love to Read month;
- partnered with the Thompson Regional Library and Perimeter Airlines to distribute books at no cost to remote Aboriginal communities; (over 12,000 books from these two initiatives);
- developed and distributed a teaching tool to literacy programs "Going to the Doctor" to assist adult learners to take responsibility for their health, revising a Yukon booklet (funded by The Winnipeg Foundation);

3) The broad services to the 290,000 low literate Manitobans:

- initiated discussions with the Premier and as a result of the discussions LPM has set up a committee of literacy experts representing literacy programs, university, library and government to develop a new provincial literacy strategy;
 - in March 2005 hosted a health and literacy conference to inform health providers of the impact of low literacy (funded by The Winnipeg Foundation);
 - hosted in July 2005, at the request of the National Literacy Secretariat - a literacy roundtable at the city hall in Thompson, Manitoba which included literacy practitioners, adult learners, business and all levels of government;
 - provided with assistance from The Winnipeg Foundation - a plain language service* to small social service agencies at little or no cost;
 - offered plain language services* to provincial government agencies and departments to ensure public documents are at a reading level appropriate to their low literate clients (fee for service);
 - respond to calls on the LEARN Line, a referral and information service for learners, their friends, family, employers, and from a variety of government, social agencies and educators. It also serves individuals interested in volunteering in literacy (funded by Adult Learning and Literacy Branch of the Manitoba Department of Advanced Education and Literacy);
 - in partnership with the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce (September '05 and '06) hosted Literacy Partners' Breakfast of Champions event for the premier to present the Council of the Federation Literacy Award to an adult learner, reaching over 175 business attendees with the literacy message.
- * for details see the Plain Language Service icon on our home page: www.mb.literacy.ca

A few other highlights outside the time frame referred to above:

- produced a TV teaching resource "Math Works" which has reached more than 100,000 viewers in remote communities across Canada (funded by a \$100,000 grant from Manitoba Lotteries Commission). It has been converted into CD-Rom and DVD formats, and is available through Grassroots Press;
- invited to sit on a national committee of the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators to assist Manitoba municipalities on issues regarding literacy issues with their staff;
- at the request of the Premier, Literacy Partners was a delegate to the national Council of the Federation (COF) summit Competing for Tomorrow: A Postsecondary and Skills Summit (Ottawa, February 2006);
- in June 2006 Literacy Partners of Manitoba was a delegate to the Council of the Ministers of Education (CMEC) forum on literacy in Prince George, BC;
- a result of ongoing discussions with the Premier, provincial cabinet ministers and MLAs in 2006 September has been designated as 'Literacy Month' in Manitoba and the first Minister of Literacy in Manitoba's history was appointed on September 21st.

Literacy Partners of Manitoba has channelled resources into literacy programs; has connected literacy teachers and tutors to the best techniques and materials; and has built partnerships with businesses, governments and communities to increase the opportunities for Manitobans to acquire the learning, literacy and essential skills they need to participate in a knowledge-based economy and society.