



Council of the Federation Announces Literacy Award Winners for 2010

WINNIPEG, August 4, 2010 – Canada’s Premiers today announced the recipients of the sixth annual Council of the Federation Literacy Award. Presented in each province and territory, the award celebrates outstanding achievement, innovative practice and excellence in literacy.

The recipients of the 2010 Council of the Federation Literacy Award are:

Margaret Chegwin – Alberta
Pete Grinberg – British Columbia
Angela Keno – Manitoba
Eleanor Kingston – New Brunswick
Frenzada Mallet – New Brunswick
Robin Grant – Newfoundland and Labrador
Noreen Morin – Northwest Territories
Marcia Jeffers – Nova Scotia
Elisapee Flaherty – Nunavut
Leah Morris – Ontario
Trout River Industries Inc. – Prince Edward Island
Danielle Beaudry – Québec
Kim Newlove – Saskatchewan
Eleanor Millard – Yukon

“On behalf of all Premiers, I extend congratulations to the 2010 recipients of the Council of the Federation Literacy Award,” said Greg Selinger, Premier of Manitoba and incoming Chair of the Council of the Federation. “Recognizing that literacy skills are the essential building blocks for the development of a vibrant society and economy, this year’s recipients have all shown an exceptional commitment to literacy.”

The award recognizes outstanding contributions made by Canadians across the entire spectrum of the field of literacy, including family, Aboriginal, health, workplace and community literacy. Each year the award is presented to educators, volunteers, learners, community organizations, and businesses in each province and territory.

Each recipient receives a certificate, signed by the Premier of their province or territory, as well as a Council of the Federation Literacy Award medallion.

Premiers created the award in 2004 to recognize the importance of literacy as a major factor in Canadians' ability to participate as full and active citizens in all areas of society.

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The Council of the Federation is comprised of all 13 provincial and territorial Premiers. It enables Premiers to work collaboratively to strengthen the Canadian federation by fostering a constructive relationship among the provinces and territories, and with the federal government.

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

2010 Council of the Federation Literacy Award Recipients

Margaret Chegwin – Alberta

Margaret Chegwin has been volunteering in the field of literacy in various capacities and communities since 1994. She began as a volunteer tutor in Grande Prairie and when she moved to Wetaskiwin, her passion led her to the Wetaskiwin Community Literacy Program. She has volunteered in many capacities, including as a board member, a tutor, a mentor, fundraiser, and literacy event organizer. Ms. Chegwin is also a reporter with a local paper and frequently highlights literacy events and issues, engaging the broader community in related challenges and opportunities. Her nominators describe Ms. Chegwin as a passionate, giving, and inspiring individual who strives to learn all that she can about literacy and regards literacy as “one of the greatest gifts” that she can help give.

Pete Grinberg – British Columbia

Pete Grinberg began his career as a high school teacher in Ontario 25 years ago. He later taught at the Kamloops Christian School, where he developed an alternate, self-paced program for struggling students. Since 2003, he has taught at the Kamloops Regional Correctional Centre (KRCC). During his time at the KRCC, he has developed and continues to coordinate Street School, a community literacy program for adults with learning difficulties, and a vital link between the corrections system and the community. Pete actively promotes the Street School and solicits volunteers to support this unique program which helps inmates transition from custody into the community. The program has proven to be successful as enrolment has risen from five students to 170, and this year 19 students will graduate with a grade 12 diploma. As an Adult Continuing Education teacher with School District 73 – Kamloops-Thompson, Pete continues to work tirelessly, helping learners reach their individual literacy goals.

Angela Keno – Manitoba

Angela Keno always wanted to improve her literacy skills, but as a single parent of three sons she was unable to attend programs due to family commitments. In 2009 when the Westgrove Learning Centre opened in her housing complex, she enrolled and eagerly worked on strategies to improve her reading. She achieved a tremendous amount in a short time and overcame many barriers to learning. Now she helps her sons with their homework, assists other students to learn math, and volunteers with Winnipeg Harvest, a non-profit, community-based organization whose ultimate goal is to collect and share surplus food with the hungry. With her increased confidence and new literacy skills, Angela obtained part-time employment as a Community Helper at the family resource centre. She is a leader and role model who offers encouragement and support for those around her, both in the classroom and in the community.

Eleanor Kingston – New Brunswick

Assisting adults with literacy skills can be a challenge, however, assisting adults who have suffered a mental illness to obtain literacy skills can be even more challenging. However, this is not the case for Eleanor Kingston, who championed a unique program that helps this group acquire literacy and life skills. In 2003, Eleanor, having devoted her life to working with the Schizophrenia Society, realized a more comprehensive program was needed. She partnered with the New Brunswick Department of Education to develop the first literacy class in the province for people with mental illness. The impact of this program is overwhelming in that over 40 learners have completed this class, have moved on to college or other areas of training, become employed either full or part-time or become volunteers in the community.

Frenzada Mallet – New Brunswick

Frenzada Mallet has taught for 35 years in Quebec and New Brunswick schools as well as in community colleges in the Acadian Peninsula. As a volunteer, she taught French grammar courses at the local library for 15 years and, in addition to revising texts, has helped out at the local seniors' home for approximately 10 years. Ms. Mallet has a passion for the French language, and no matter how great the challenge, she wanted to ensure that literacy would be a learning solution that could open up opportunities for people of all ages, levels of education and from all walks of life. In addition, she made it possible for some of her learners to challenge themselves by getting them to participate in regional and national dictation competitions.

Robin Grant – Newfoundland and Labrador

Ms. Robin Grant is a professional writer, researcher, producer and editor, perhaps best known as founder and Executive and Artistic Director at *For the Love of Learning Incorporated*, an alternative education organization serving young Newfoundland and Labrador adults. Guided by the belief that too many individuals were being held back by a lack of education and literacy, through circumstances often beyond their control, she made the development of reading and writing skills an integral part of her organization's curriculum. In May, 2008, Ms. Grant was shortlisted as one of three national finalists in the Social Action category of *Canadian Living* magazine's "Me to We" awards for her work with *For the Love of Learning*. Ms. Grant was also profiled in the January 2009 issue of *Chatelaine* magazine. The article entitled "How One Woman Made a Difference" focused on Canadians working to help improve literacy skills in Canada. Ms. Grant has a B.A. (English) from Memorial University of Newfoundland, a Journalism degree from King's College, and a never-ending passion to bolster and encourage literacy and creativity in those who need it most.

Noreen Morin – Northwest Territories

Noreen Morin is an adult learner who grew up on the land and had little formal schooling. Her first language is South Slavey. When she was a teenager she moved to Fort Liard where she learned to speak English but did not learn how to read or write. After experiencing numerous personal hardships, at age 26 Noreen decided to go to Aurora College to improve her literacy skills. Over the past seven years Noreen has worked with determination and passion while keeping her traditional culture strong. Her attendance record is outstanding, and "her optimism is indestructible." Noreen is now an avid reader and writer, and a role model for adult learners in the community.

Marcia Jeffers – Nova Scotia

Marcia Jeffers has every reason to be proud of herself. She returned to school after ten years and has excelled both academically and personally. When an opportunity arose to enrol in the Link Continuing Care Assistant (CCA) Program, she did so, not expecting to succeed. However, that first month she decided to change and attributes this desire to change, to a handful of teachers who believed in her. Marcia approached school work with a determination she had never experienced before and her marks soon reflected her abilities. Her volunteer work includes the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Student's Association, the Breakfast Program, Student Success Banquet and Orientation Committee, in addition to tutoring at a community learning program. Marcia graduated in June 2010 with a Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults and a Continuing Care Assistant certificate from NSCC Truro Campus through the Link CCA Program. She is very proud to have been chosen to be Valedictorian at her graduation ceremonies.

Elisapee Flaherty – Nunavut

Elisapee's career in the field of literacy began as a teacher in the community of Kimmirut where she taught primary grades for eleven years. Having moved to Iqaluit in 2006, Elisapee became a Consultant at the Department of Education's Teaching and Learning Centre. As a further example of her commitment to higher learning, she received her Master's of Education in 2009. Elisapee continues to promote literacy in her community by working as a Consultant at the Teaching and Learning Centre and through her dedication as the Friends of Iqaluit Centennial Library's Inuktitut Literacy Coordinator. Elisapee plays a key role in the success of the Literacy program, encouraging literacy by targeting school-aged and early learners. The ability to offer literacy programs in Inuktitut is vital to the goal of serving all Iqaluit families, and as a result, many parents have commented on their children's improvement with the language. Elisapee is an outstanding role model for children and the local community. She is both safeguarding the Inuktitut language for the future, and providing children with the tools they will need to succeed in a rapidly-changing territory.

Leah Morris - Ontario

Leah Morris has shown herself to be a passionate, visionary and engaging person, who has inspired her community toward action on literacy. Under her leadership, the Adult Basic Education Association of Hamilton has become a well-established regional literacy network and community resource. Ms. Morris was instrumental in educating the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce about the relevance of literacy and essential skills as a business imperative. In 2004 Ms. Morris set out to create Lifelong Learning Week, without any dedicated funding, staff or partners. Her dream is now a reality and the Lifelong Learning Week will be celebrating its sixth anniversary this year. This is just one of many other examples demonstrating the singular success of Ms. Morris as a networking leader.

Trout River Industries Inc. – Prince Edward Island

Trout River Industries Inc. in Coleman, PEI manufactures uniquely designed live bottom trailers. In March of 2009, this company initiated a workplace education program at the plant. Workplace Learning PEI Inc. assessed the workers to determine what they felt they needed to be successful in their day-to-day work. Staff suggested General Education Development (GED) preparation to earn the PEI Grade Twelve Equivalency certificate, basic computer, communications and leadership training. To date, ten of the forty-one employees have written and passed the 5 GED tests and have received the grade 12 equivalency diploma. Many other employees have taken computer skills training at work. Trout River Industries Inc. introduced a unique in-house program called “Trout River 101”. Production was shut down for a week while all employees took part in training to enhance teamwork, attitude, communication and essential skills. By investing in their employees, Trout River has seen increased confidence among their employees and they have decreased their trailer production time from 4 days to 1½ days. Trout River Industries Inc. is truly a literacy leader and a company that fosters a learning culture at work.

Danielle Beaudry – Québec

Danielle had to drop out of school at the end of Grade 7. Despite her mother’s support and encouragement, she had a hard time integrating in her first school experience. Several years later, she decided to register in a literacy program in order to improve her writing and reading skills. “I decided on my own to go back to school and I’m very proud of it.” Her literacy training gave her additional skills to communicate with her peers, increasing at the same time her self-confidence and independence. She is now a member of several women’s associations and is involved with helping the elderly. All her life Mrs. Beaudry has met challenges, both the ones presented to her and those she gives herself. “I haven’t always been lucky, but today I want to go forward and I’m motivated to do so.”

Kim Newlove – Saskatchewan

Demonstrating a commitment to literacy leadership, innovation, research, promotion, advocacy and professional knowledge exchange throughout her 29 years at Saskatoon Public Schools, Ms. Newlove has served as an elementary teacher, vice-principal, consultant, coordinator and Superintendent of Education. Kim Newlove was instrumental in Saskatoon Public Schools adopting early learning and literacy as a learning priority and establishing the multi-faceted Literacy for Life program. Now in its fifth year, the program’s overall goal is to have all K-12 students reading at, or above, grade level. According to the Deputy Director of Saskatoon Public Schools, Kim Newlove’s legacy “has had a resounding positive impact on our school division, our community, and our partners. It has also had a positive impact throughout our province and even onto the national and international scene.”

Eleanor Millard – Yukon

Much of Eleanor Millard's adult education work was originally in the field of adult literacy. As a founding member and president of the Yukon Literacy Council, she was instrumental in designing and implementing the first adult literacy programs in Yukon. Ms. Millard was the developer and coordinator of Project Wordpower (Yukon Learn Society), which has successfully operated since the program's inception, and she has since been contracted to train volunteer tutors for them. She has trained First Nations in training-on-the-job positions in social services, adult education and economic development. Ms. Millard designed and developed several education and social service projects, including a flexible six-step funding proposal writing workshop which was presented in the Yukon and B.C. Ms. Millard's northern experience has given her a creative but practical approach to community-based research and education that responds realistically to unique situations. She has work experience in all three territories and has applied, and continues to apply, her education and experience to several volunteer board positions in the field of adult literacy.