

Community Literacy of Ontario's NOVEMBER 2008 E-COMMUNIQUE

Dear CLO members,

Community Literacy of Ontario is pleased to present its **NOVEMBER 2008** Members' E-Communiqué.

Topics covered in this E-Communiqué are:

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New Online Discussion Group for Community Literacy Agencies is Now Available!

Community Literacy of Ontario is pleased to announce the creation of a new online discussion forum, where Ontario's community based literacy agencies will once again have the chance to link with one other to ask questions of their peers, share resources and strategies, and brainstorm ideas. This forum is called "*Community Literacy of Ontario*".

These new online discussions are provided as a free service to the literacy community by AlphaPlus Centre.

CLO's board and staff are very keen to get this discussion going because we know that many community based practitioners valued the information sharing that occurred on the previous AlphaCom discussion forum. All CLO members are welcome to join this discussion.

The new online forum has three parts:

1. "*CLO Announcements*" Forum: This forum is designed for general CLO announcements and information. This forum is public and it can be read by anyone on the Internet.
2. "*Community Based Literacy*" Forum: Only CLO members can read messages and post information on our second forum called "Community Based Literacy". This is where most

of the “action” will happen and where you can discuss issues with your peers, knowing that this is a private space for group members only.

3. **“CLO Board” Forum:** This forum is for the board of directors of Community Literacy of Ontario only.

Steps to joining the new “Community Based Literacy” online discussion forum:

You will find the link to the new online discussion system at: <http://on.alphaplus.ca/forums>.

To create a new account:

1. Click on “*Register*” on the top left hand corner of the main system page
2. Click “*I Agree*” to the “Registration Agreement” (bottom of the page)
3. Complete the “*Registration Form*” (type in user name, password, email address; keep the default settings for “account preferences”, “time zone” and “language preferences”; and finally, complete the image verification (necessary for spam prevention)
4. Click “*Submit Registration*” (at bottom of the page)
5. An automatic confirmation email will be sent to the email address you provided; click on the “*Activation Link*” included in the email
6. You are now a registered user of the new system – you can visit the new discussion system at any time by clicking on <http://on.alphaplus.ca/forums>, entering your user name and password (under “*login*” top left hand corner of the main page)

To register for any private forums, a couple of extra steps are needed. To join CLO’s private forum called “*Community Based Literacy*”:

1. Click on <http://on.alphaplus.ca/forums>, and log in using your user name and password
2. Click on “*User CP*” (CP stands for “control panel”) at the top centre of the main page
3. On the User Control Panel page look for “*Miscellaneous*” in the left side bar
4. Click on “*Group Memberships*” under Miscellaneous
5. Under “Group Memberships” look for Community Literacy of Ontario’s forum called “*Community Based Literacy*” and click the “*Join Group*” button
6. Completing this step will send a membership request notice to CLO for approval
7. Once you are approved by CLO, the “*Community Based Literacy*” forum will automatically be listed on your main page.

The new online discussion system is very user-friendly and easy to learn. Most functions (posting a new thread, replying to an old thread, editing or deleting your message, submitting attachments, etc.) are highly intuitive. However, change can still be hard for some so the staff at AlphaPlus have kindly set up a discussions group to help people learn the new system called “*Forum Help*”.

Within “*Forum Help*” AlphaPlus has posted the responses to standard questions. And, you can also post questions of your own. Or things you find out about the system that you think others may be interested in. There is also a sub-forum for “*Forum Help*” called “*Practice, experiment and try things out*” (no explanation needed for that!).

Thank you, AlphaPlus Centre for making these online discussion forums possible.

The board of directors and staff of Community Literacy of Ontario is very much looking forward to having the community based literacy community back online again. Let the discussions begin!

Participating in Ontario's Pre-Budget Consultations with the Minister of Finance

And for more on the important issue of funding... Dwight Duncan, Minister of Finance and Revenue, is asking Ontarians to share their ideas for the 2009 Ontario budget. This is a good chance for those concerned with literacy (and other issues) to have their say on the provincial budget.

Minister Duncan asks Ontarians to respond to these five key questions by submitting responses directly online using the form provided, or by email, fax or mail.

1. During this period of global economic uncertainty and fiscal challenges, what should the Ontario government's top priorities be for the 2009 Budget?
2. During challenging economic times, should the Ontario government strive to achieve a balanced budget or run a deficit in order to protect priority programs and services?
3. Given the current fiscal challenges, what government programs could be delayed, phased in more slowly or eliminated?
4. What further steps can the Ontario government take to promote economic growth and job creation?
5. How can the Ontario government work more effectively with other levels of government and other key partners during challenging economic times?

All information is available at: www.fin.gov.on.ca/english/consultations/prebud09/.

Community Literacy of Ontario is currently preparing a written submission on behalf of community-based literacy agencies to the Minister of Finance, as we have every year, about the critical need for increased funding and the extensive social and economic benefits that literacy brings to our province.

Announcing CLO's 2008-2009 Board of Directors

At our Annual General Member on November 4, 2008 Community Literacy of Ontario elected its 2008-2009 Board of Directors. CLO is guided by a large board comprised of dynamic and forward thinking literacy practitioners who represent community literacy agencies located in every region of Ontario (central, east, northeast, northwest and southwest). Our board members bring great value to CLO by sharing their regional perspectives, talents, insights and wisdom and by providing direct feedback from community literacy agencies all across Ontario.

Here are the members of Community Literacy of Ontario's 2008-2009 board of directors:

- Carynne Arnold, Kingston Literacy (*Treasurer*)
- Debra Barrett, Street Haven Learning Centre, Toronto
- Chris Benninger, Adult Language and Learning, Chatham
- Linda Conley, Prince Edward Learning Centre, Picton (*Chair*)
- Elizabeth Debergh, Wellington County Learning Centre
- Barb Duguay, Valley Adult Learning Centre, Fort Frances

- Sue Hughes, Literacy Council of South Temiskaming
- Barbara McFater, Adult Learning and Employment Programs, Toronto (*Vice-Chair*)
- Bert Providence, Toronto Public Library
- Marsha Roadhouse, Quinte Adult Day School, Belleville (*Secretary*)
- Lynne Zuliani, North Algoma Literacy Coalition, Wawa

One of our board members, Cheryl Reid, is retiring from the CLO board. Cheryl has played a pivotal role on CLO's board development committee. Cheryl brought her expertise, commitment, creativity and fun to the CLO board. You would think it wasn't possible, but Cheryl and her fellow committee member Bert Providence designed an activity to better help board members understand CLO's board manual and policies and procedures that was both fun and engaging and had board members rolling in the aisles with laughter as well as learning at the same time. Cheryl, thanks for your support and guidance; we will miss you!

“Getting Online” Research Report on Online Learning in Canada is Now Available!

The GO team is pleased to announce that *A Research Report on Online Learning for Canadian Literacy Practitioners* is available as a downloadable PDF document at www.nald.ca/gettingonline/goreport/goreport.pdf

This report overviews the trends and issues identified through national research into online learning in Canada. It includes:

- Research methodologies and initial findings
- Current methods of delivering online learning
- Successes and innovative approaches to online learning
- Online learning technologies
- Effective techniques for introducing online learning
- Differences between face-to-face and online learning
- Evaluation methods and results for online learning
- Perceptions of the future of online learning

Next steps for the GO Project include:

1. The GO team is currently researching and writing a resource guide called *Bridging Distances: Promising Practices for Online Learning in the Canadian Literacy Community*. This research guide will include the following chapters: Online Facilitation; Being an Online Learner; Online Course Content; Technology. *Bridging Distances* will be available in late Spring 2009 on the GO website.
2. The GO team is also developing self-study, web-based training modules about promising practices in online learning. These modules will cover: Overview of Online Learning; Online Facilitation; Tips for Online Learners; Developing Online Content; Technology; and Future Trends. These modules will be available on the GO website in Spring 2009.
3. The GO team is delivering two additional online courses for literacy practitioners about online learning. Please see the next section for more information.

All About GO:

“Getting Online: Distance Education Promising Practices for Canadian Literacy Practitioners” (or the GO Project for short) is an innovative national project designed to research trends, technologies and promising practices in online learning in Canada. You can learn more via the GO website at: www.nald.ca/gettingonline.

The GO Project is hosted by Athabasca University. It brings together various project partners including Community Literacy of Ontario, Writing Out Loud (Alberta), and Capilano College (British Columbia). GO is funded by the National Office of Literacy and Learning (Adult Learning, Literacy and Essential Skills Program of the Government of Canada), and runs from June 1, 2007 – May 31, 2009.

“GO” Project Online Learning Courses in 2009

Are you curious about online learning? Are you interested in developing skills with learning technologies? Do you want to experience online learning but are unsure where to start? The Getting Online (GO) Project team is excited to offer an Introduction to Online Learning course that has been specially designed for literacy practitioners in Canada.

This 8 week online course will explore a variety of topics such as:

- Personal hopes and fears about online learning
- Building online learning communities
- Online learning and the literacy field

Participants will be introduced to various learning technologies including Moodle, Elluminate, and teleconferencing.

The course has already been offered once (in Fall 2008) and it will be offered two more times on the following dates:

- January 12 to March 6, 2009
- March 23 to May 15, 2009

Registration for each course is limited to 15 participants. The course is free, but participants will need to purchase the course textbook for \$45.00. For further information or to register, please contact Diana Twiss by email at dtwiss@capcollege.bc.ca or by telephone at 778-988-5492. Courses will be filled on a first come, first served basis. Please register as soon as possible.

The Learning Edge: The Apprenticeship Issue

The Wellington County Literacy Council has released another issue of the wonderful online resource called The Learning Edge. The Learning Edge is designed for adult learners and offers both audio and visual based features. The topic of this issue is apprenticeship. Articles include:

- Basic information on Ontario's apprenticeship system
- The five steps to apprenticeship which helps adult learners to walk through the various steps required to become an apprentice
- Apprentice voices (hearing from three actual apprentices)

- Hear it from the Dean (an interview with the Dean of the School of Transportation and Building Trades of Algonquin College)
- Key questions and answers for apprentices

Please see www.thewclc.ca/edge/issue10/index.html for more details.

The Literacy Network of Durham Region's "The 3Rs of Research Practitioner Toolkit"

"The 3Rs of Research Practitioner Toolkit" was developed by the Literacy Network of Durham Region (LiNDR) to provide literacy networks and programs with ways to efficiently identify current field research that is relevant and train instructors on how to use research in the classroom. It is intended to contribute towards the practice of active reflection by literacy practitioners on current research, theory and the integration of project products in order to benefit the learner.

This Toolkit is divided into several sections: a) addressing information about the value of research and research integration, b) strategies to address barriers to research integration, c) tool and templates, and, d) a model for integrating research into practice effectively.

For more information please see: www.lindr.on.ca/research.htm

Youth Literacy Canada Website

Literacy BC has created a wonderful website called "Youth Literacy Canada". This innovative website is designed to provide resources, information and tools to increase youth literacy in our country. The Youth Literacy Canada website shares information on low literacy youth and the problems and learning challenges they face; promising practices for increasing youth literacy, the voices and stories of youth, research and tools and resources.

You can learn more about Youth Literacy Canada at: www.youthliteracy.ca/

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