

ACALA NEWS

ACALA, 70 West Street, Antigonish, NS, B2G 1R8; 863 -3060; e-mail acala@strait.ednet.ns.ca.

ACALA is the *Antigonish County Adult Learning Association*.

Fall Issue

November 2006

Learner Success Stories

Tammy Briand's Story

by Mary Mahoney

Tammy Briand was a stay-at-home mom with a husband and two small children. Her life seemed quite fulfilled, and then it threw her a curve. In May 2000, Tammy's husband broke his leg. Then, just two months later, before the family could finish dealing with this problem, her husband had a heart attack. Suddenly life looked very uncertain.

In September of the same year, Tammy decided to join a program at ACALA. Taking that first step, Tammy says, was definitely the hardest, but she had already faced greater challenges in her life. Tammy loved the ACALA program. Everyone was wonderful to her, and they steered her in the right direction. They set up meetings with career personnel, answered questions, and helped with any concerns she had. Tammy completed her GED in March 2001, followed by a two-year photography course.

Today, Tammy has her own successful photography business. Her dad, who has his own company, supplied Tammy with materials for her new photography studio. Her father and brother teamed up and built the studio in Tammy's home. Her future plans include doing what she loves best – taking pictures and getting her name out there so her business will continue to grow. Tammy has this to say to new ACALA learners: *Don't be afraid to take that first step. Do it for yourself, follow your heart and your dreams. You can make it happen!*

Anyone wanting to contact Tammy Briand Photography can e-mail her at tammybriand@hotmail.com or

On Being an Adult Learner

This has been a learning and growing experience – one that I'm glad I made. – Theresa MacKeigan

Coming back to school as an adult learner involves many challenges, but the rewards are well worth the effort we put into it. Wow, I love it! – Mary

Coming here every day gives me the strength to succeed in life. – Robin

Learning – what better way to spend our free time. – Ann Landry

I came back to school to better my education and maybe become a lawyer or a doctor. – John Chisholm

Being an adult learner is an inspiring experience for me. – Carolyn Hudson

One of the things that I enjoy about this program is that I can work at my own pace. I have time to take everything in and understand it all. – Michelle

I came back to school to show my children that I could get my GED and to not give up, so in the future they will not give up on themselves. – Gwen Muisse

Thanks to the opportunity to attend ACALA, I feel like I have been given a second chance to

Literacy Matters

This information was compiled and organized by the learners in ACALA programs.

Did You Know?¹

- ❖ **280,880** people in Nova Scotia do not have a high school diploma
- ❖ **4,980** people were enrolled in the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) in 2004, which is less than 2% of adults who could benefit
- ❖ **70%** of jobs in Canada require college-level reading skills
- ❖ Less than 48% of Nova Scotia's workforce has college-level reading skills
- ❖ About 25% of Atlantic Canadians have trouble with everyday reading and writing
- ❖ 65% of people entering jail for the first time have less than a grade 7 education
- ❖ People with low levels of literacy are more likely to be in dangerous jobs, be vulnerable to injury, and experience chronic stress that impairs the immune system
- ❖ Literacy is the foundation for all further learning
- ❖ When governments invest in literacy programs for adults, children benefit, too
- ❖ Literacy development in families affects every other area of family life: health, economic status, and opportunities
- ❖ Literacy carries profound individual and social benefits
- ❖ People with higher levels of literacy participate more in the community and society, which benefits everyone

Literacy is **the** essential skill. It is the ability to use printed information to function in society, at work, and in the family. It is the combination of thinking and social skills that we need to analyze and use information to control our own lives, achieve our goals, and develop our knowledge and potential. Every Nova Scotian should have equal access to quality education.

All learning must be respected

¹ Information gathered from the Literacy Nova Scotia website at www.ns.literacy.ca