

# Our Voice

**Community Literacy of Ontario**

**80 Bradford Street  
Suite 508**

**Barrie, Ontario  
L4N 6S7**

**Tel: 705-733-2312  
Fax: 705-733-6197**

[www.nald.ca/clo.htm](http://www.nald.ca/clo.htm)

[clo@bellnet.ca](mailto:clo@bellnet.ca)

## A Time to Celebrate!

Can you hear the applause? There is a celebration going on in literacy programs large and small, all across Ontario.

On July 2, 2009 the Honourable John Milloy, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, announced increased funding of \$25 million for literacy programs delivered by community literacy organizations, colleges, and school boards. The government has also provided \$5 million to expand e-learning for adult learners and \$3 million for research initiatives to improve services to adult learners.

Community Literacy of Ontario is proud to be part of the celebration! With our member programs and various partners in literacy we have worked extremely hard over the past year to highlight the importance of increasing government investment in Ontario's literacy agencies.

CLO thanks the Government of Ontario for providing additional funding for literacy agencies. This new funding will provide critical financial support to 300 adult literacy programs across Ontario. These agencies work with diligence and commitment to help adult learners pursue their dreams for a better future in the workplace, home and community. This investment is an extremely positive step in supporting the province's literacy agencies as they deliver critical training services to over 48,000 adult students.

The success stories that will result from this funding increase for literacy, combined with the passion and commitment of learners and literacy programs, will be many. New doors will open as adult learners benefit from increased literacy and basic skills. To showcase the positive impacts that will occur, here is a quote from an adult learner about the funding increase:

*"I went to a local Employment Ontario employment agency and I was then referred to the Learning Centre as I did not have enough education to get a job. I had also injured myself; and the skills I did have, I could no longer use. The Learning Centre staff helped me prepare for my GED, and with increased funding to the literacy field I am going to take College Prep courses at the Learning Centre. I am well on my way to becoming an Addictions Counsellor".*

It is indeed a time to celebrate in Ontario's literacy community!



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# Online Promotion of Literacy to Employment Ontario Partners

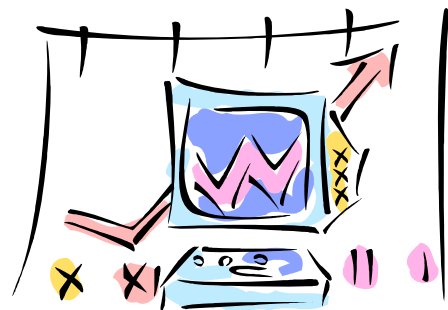
Community Literacy of Ontario has received funding from the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for a project called: *Online Promotion of Literacy to Employment Ontario Partners*.

In this project, CLO will create five informative, audio-visual, user-friendly, and easy-to-access online presentations to educate stakeholders about literacy and literacy issues. These presentations will help to:

- ⇒ Increase awareness among Employment Ontario partners and other stakeholders about the importance of literacy and LBS agencies
- ⇒ Educate partners and stakeholders about the role played by LBS agencies in supporting adults to increase their literacy skills and gain access to other employment and training services
- ⇒ Underline the strong co-relation between enhanced literacy skills and success in other employment and training programs

These online presentations will contain short, effective and powerful educational messages about the key need for literacy. At this point in time, we are planning that CLO's online presentations will cover the following topics:

1. What is literacy and why is it important?
2. Literacy in Ontario
3. Benefits of literacy training
4. Understanding clients with literacy needs
5. Literacy and Employment Ontario partners



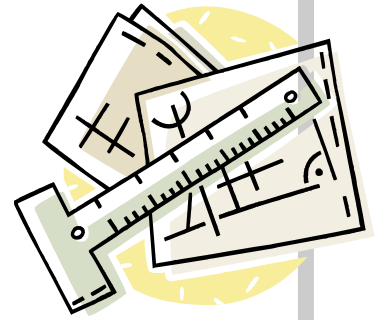
The presentations will use an online, audio-visual format so that they can easily be shared over the Internet or via CLO's website. Having information in this format will make it easy for EO partners and other stakeholders to access CLO's informative and user-friendly literacy presentations completely at their convenience.

The board of directors of Community Literacy of Ontario and an advisory committee (still to be recruited) of four Regional Network Executive Directors will provide informed advice as this project unfolds.

This project runs from August 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010.

# CAPACITY INSTITUTE AND RESOURCE GUIDE

Community Literacy of Ontario is proud to announce its newest project: *Capacity Institute and Resource Guide*. This project is designed to assist literacy agencies to further develop, strengthen and showcase their organizational capacity under Employment Ontario. This project is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and will run from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010.



CLO's *Capacity Institute and Resource Guide* project has three major deliverables:

## **Organizational Capacity Institute**

CLO will organize and host a two-day "Organizational Capacity Institute" for 40 community literacy agencies in November 2009. A variety of key workshop topics will be covered by excellent speakers on capacity issues in the not-for-profit sector, and many tools and resources will be shared to help literacy agencies to strengthen their capacity as part of the transformation of Training Services under Employment Ontario. This exciting event will be held on November 5 and 6, 2009 at the Holiday Inn in Kingston, Ontario.

## **Organizational Capacity Research**

CLO will conduct research into organizational capacity needs and current promising practices in the literacy community and broader non-profit sector. Methods will include: holding several focus groups with literacy practitioners; conducting Internet and print-based research; developing linkages with other Employment Ontario stakeholders and experts in non-profit management; and gathering input at the Capacity Institute.

## **Organizational Capacity Resource Guide**

CLO will research and write a user-friendly Organizational Capacity Resource Guide. Topics will include but not necessarily be limited to: risk management, HR, finance, governance, and policy development. We will circulate printed copies to our members and a PDF version will be posted on CLO's website for broad access by any interested stakeholder.

## Working Together Towards Ontario's Adult Literacy Curriculum

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' is working to develop an Adult Literacy Curriculum (ALC). The ALC will be a valuable tool for LBS practitioners that will increase their ability to demonstrate learner achievements to next-step service providers and ultimately lead to improved outcomes for learners, including easier and more successful transitions.

The ALC Project is building upon previous research and analysis and is strongly based on HRSDC's Essential Skills and on the five transition pathways (Independence, Employment, Secondary Credit, Postsecondary, and Apprenticeship) as defined in the Learner Skill Attainment Framework.

Significant progress has been made with the definition of principles, the creation of a repository of research for the project team (and practitioners once the new curriculum is piloted), and the identification of existing recent research and development products which will inform work on the framework for each of the transition paths. The curriculum framework and the assessment framework, which will provide the information required in developing the actual syllabus for each transition path and stream, are also being completed. Through complementary projects, existing curriculum materials are being researched and new curriculum material is being developed. Piloting of the curriculum package with literacy agencies is scheduled for January 2010.

Project staff from AlphaPlus, Community Literacy of Ontario, College Sector Committee, Deaf Literacy Initiative, La Coalition, Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy, Ontario Association of Adult and Continuing Education School Board Administrators, Ontario Native Literacy Coalition, and the Ontario Literacy Coalition make up this skilled and dedicated team. The collaborative nature of the Working Group allows for the development of a curriculum that will meet the needs of the various sectors and streams.

The ALC project is supported by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. The project work team is led by a MTCU project manager and is supported by an ALC Steering Committee, an Internal Reference Group, and the Executive Directors of the participating sectoral and stream organizations.

CLO's involvement in the ALC Initiative involves serving on the Working Group and conducting direct research and development of the curriculum, and research into Independence and Employment curriculum materials that are used in agencies to help learners transition to their goals, validation with our member agencies, and piloting of the Independence and Employment portions of the ALC. (See article on page 5.)

In addition to circulating more information in fall 2009, CLO will be providing an ALC project update at our conference in November. Please stay tuned for more information about the progress of this important initiative.



## Adult Literacy Curriculum Research and Piloting Project

In April 2009, Community Literacy of Ontario received funding from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for an Adult Literacy Curriculum Piloting and Research Project. Through this project, CLO will:

- Research existing Independence and Employment resources used in literacy agencies that can be adapted or augmented to work with the Adult Literacy Curriculum.
- Pilot the Independence and Employment Pathways of the new Adult Literacy Curriculum.
- Share more detailed ALC information with CLO members and solicit feedback

### Resource Research

In July 2009, CLO hired a research and writing team that is being lead by Joyce Bigelow from Northern Connections Adult Learning Centres. This talented team will identify the top existing resources used in literacy agencies that can be adapted or augmented to work with the Adult Literacy Curriculum (ALC). CLO's research will explore materials used to help learners successfully transition to their goals of Independence and Employment. This research will be completed by December 2009. We know that community literacy agencies use a wide variety of effective tools and resources to teach adult learners. Please let us know about your best and your favourite Independence and Employment resources and materials by having one of the team come for a site-visit, by completing the resource survey in early September, or by contacting Joyce Bigelow directly, at: [literacy@frontenac.net](mailto:literacy@frontenac.net)

### Initial Validation

We want to hear from you! In fall 2009, CLO plans to share more detailed ALC information with our members via a 4-page overview that highlights the approach being used to develop the Adult Literacy Curriculum, what the curriculum will entail, and the timelines for implementation. You will be asked to provide your informed feedback to CLO via a variety of methods, which will be summarized and shared with the ALC development team.

### Piloting of Independence and Employment Pathway

CLO will pilot the draft ALC curriculum relating to Independence with community-based, college and school-board literacy agencies and learners. CLO will work closely with the College Sector Committee (CSC) and the Ontario Association of Adult and Continuing Education School Board Administrators (CESBA) to pilot the Employment portion of the Adult Literacy Curriculum in the community-based, college and school board sectors.

These pilots will begin in January 2010 and will be completed in March 2010. Further details on the piloting process will be available in fall 2009.

## Performance Management

During the month of May 2009, Community Literacy of Ontario facilitated an online performance management classroom on Moodle. Over 50 literacy practitioners joined us to explore performance management using this new online learning technology.

In this online course, CLO covered the following topics: Introduction to Performance Management; Performance Management in Action; Agency Assessment; Organizational Capacity; and Looking Ahead. Our performance management classroom used a variety of learning strategies including providing excellent content, YouTube videos and audiocasts from literacy practitioners, quizzes, an online scavenger hunt, a word search, a caption contest, a haiku contest, online discussion forums, live chats and links to great online material and resources. It was a valuable learning experience both for participants and CLO. We will be turning this into a self-study classroom in August 2009 for literacy practitioners to use at their convenience.

Evaluation comments to CLO's online classroom included:

- *"This classroom contained lots of information both for those who are just starting out as well as those with more experience"*
- *"Having all of this information in one place online, available anytime and from anywhere, makes this training invaluable."*
- *"I liked the multi-media approach – lots of different types of information to choose from (visual, audio, text, real-life situations)".*
- *"This was a comprehensive website that is user-friendly and easy to navigate"*
- *"This site is worthwhile for all program managers! It is so appropriate and timely".*
- *"I like that I can come back over and over, picking what I want when I need it."*



CLO thanks all participants for trying something new and AlphaPlus Centre for their technical support! We look forward to more Moodling in the future and we will send out the link to the self-study performance management classroom in August 2009.

## Board Governance

Thanks to funding from the Employment Ontario Network Development Fund, Community Literacy of Ontario will be creating a new module on board governance on our on our Literacy Basics website ([www.nald.ca/literacybasics](http://www.nald.ca/literacybasics)). CLO's *Effective Board Governance* module will be launched in December 2009 and will cover the following topics:

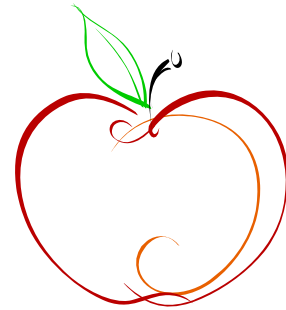
- Board roles and responsibilities
- Board accountability
- Governance structures
- Recruitment and succession planning
- Board orientation, training and support
- Board evaluation



## Lifelong Learning for Literacy Practitioners Website COMING TO A WEBSITE NEAR YOU!

In August 2009 Community Literacy of Ontario will launch its *Lifelong Learning for Literacy Practitioners* website.

This important website highlights various issues relating to education and training in the Ontario literacy community and will be an invaluable resource for literacy practitioners and others. It will increase knowledge of the skills and experience required to deliver literacy programming and share information on current training opportunities. It will also help literacy practitioners to assess current skills and future training needs.



On CLO's *Lifelong Learning for Literacy Practitioners* website you will be able to:

- ⇒ Discover valuable information, tools and resources related to adult literacy instruction in Ontario
- ⇒ Explore the educational and skills requirements to deliver literacy training
- ⇒ Find accurate information about the roles, skills and experience of Ontario's adult literacy practitioners
- ⇒ Learn about training opportunities for literacy practitioners
- ⇒ Assess your current skills and develop a personalized professional development training plan
- ⇒ Link to resources, training and professional development opportunities

We will send out additional promotional material and the website URL to the literacy community in August 2009. The *Lifelong Learning for Literacy Practitioners* website was funded by the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

This website has been reviewed by a cross-sectoral advisory committee. Their feedback was extremely positive and included:

*"This is a wonderful resource — very impressive in its breadth and scope of information. I particularly like the inclusion of training resources from beyond the literacy field".*

## CLO's BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Caryne Arnold (Kingston)
- Debra Barrett (Toronto)
- Chris Benninger (Chatham)
- Linda Conley (Picton)
- Elizabeth Debergh (Wellington County)
- Susan Hughes (Haileybury)
- Barbara McFater (Toronto)
- Bert Providence (Toronto)
- Marsha Roadhouse (Belleville)
- Lynne Zuliani (Wawa)

## CLO's STAFF

- Joan Beaudry (Administrative Assistant)
- Joyce Bigelow and team (Project Staff)
- Robyn Cook-Ritchie (Project Staff)
- Cindy Davidson (Project Staff)
- Jette Cosburn (Co-Executive Director)
- Joanne Kaattari (Co-Executive Director)

## JULY NEWSLETTER

Research/Writing/Desktop Publishing:  
Joanne Kaattari

**Thank you to our members for  
your support!**

**This newsletter was funded  
with membership fees.**

## The Getting Online Project

The *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.

Community Literacy of Ontario is pleased to be one of the partners in the Getting Online Project. Along with our other partners and the project host, Athabasca University, we are delighted to launch two new valuable resources on online learning:

- ⇒ A resource guide called *Bridging Distance: Promising Practices for Online Learning* (available at: [www.nald.ca/gettingonline/goresources/bridgingdistance/bridgingdistance.pdf](http://www.nald.ca/gettingonline/goresources/bridgingdistance/bridgingdistance.pdf))
- ⇒ Self-study, web-based training modules about promising practices in online learning (available at: [www.nald.ca/gettingonline](http://www.nald.ca/gettingonline))

These valuable resources include training, tools and information on the following topics:

- ⇒ Overview of Online Learning
- ⇒ Online Facilitation
- ⇒ Tips for Online Learners
- ⇒ Online Content
- ⇒ Online Learning Technology
- ⇒ Trends in Online Learning



For more information, please visit the GO website at: [www.nald.ca/gettingonline](http://www.nald.ca/gettingonline).