

Family Services of Greater Vancouver is top winner of the Canada Life Literacy Innovation Award

(August 26, 2019 – Toronto, ON) ABC Life Literacy Canada (ABC) is pleased to announce the top and honourable mention winners of the 2019 *Canada Life Literacy Innovation Award* (LIA). The annual award recognizes organizations that develop and implement innovative adult literacy and essential skills programs in communities across Canada.

The LIA top award will be given to Family Services of Greater Vancouver along with \$20,000, which the organization can use towards future programming. In addition to the top winner, four honourable mention winners will receive \$5,000 each. All will be honoured at ABC's Life Literacy Night ceremony in Toronto this October.

Each of the winners have demonstrated that their program has made a positive contribution to the lives of their adult learners as well as the community, and all serve as a model for other organizations to adapt.

"This year's LIA winners have yet again impressed us with not only their innovative and creative programming, but also with the demonstrated impact they've had in their communities," said Mack Rogers, Executive Director of ABC Life Literacy Canada. "We are extremely grateful to Canada Life for their continued support of this award which is helping to build capacity in the literacy and learning community."

Since its inception in 2012, 40 LIAs have been awarded to literacy organizations across the country (8 top awards and 32 honourable mention awards), representing \$320,000 in funding for the field.

"We'd like to congratulate this year's deserving winners. At Canada Life, we support educational initiatives that focus on adult literacy and recognize the need for programs that provide adult learners with the essential skills they need to succeed in life," said Debbie Down, Director, Community Relations at Canada Life. "That is why we're proud to support ABC Life Literacy Canada and the Canada Life Literacy Innovation Award. Working together with community organizations, we make a positive impact that helps improve the well-being of all Canadians."

On Wednesday, October 16, ABC will once again host a webinar by LIA top winner, Family Services of Greater Vancouver, to showcase their winning program *Caring Neighbours* as a model for best practices in the literacy and essential skills sector. [Sign up to attend the free webinar.](#)

TOP WINNER, receiving \$20,000

Family Services of Greater Vancouver, Vancouver, BC
Program: *Caring Neighbours*

Caring Neighbours is a community kitchen program that uniquely combines health, food and financial literacies and creates important social connections among vulnerable and socially isolated families, children and seniors. Participants come for the food and leave with a breadth of practical skills, including basic cooking skills, meal planning, household budgeting, social skills and an understanding of how to access the community services and resources available to them. This innovative program takes a basic human need, food, and creates a fun and accessible entry point into literacy and skills development to engage vulnerable and isolated families and individuals. *Caring Neighbours* has reached more than 1,500 individuals and has demonstrated marked success in building participants' skills and knowledge, increasing healthy social connections, confidence and trust.

HONOURABLE MENTIONS, receiving \$5,000 each

Community Living Toronto, Toronto ON

Program: *Individualized On-campus Post-Secondary Experience Network (IOPEN)*

The program provides an inclusive post-secondary learning experience for adult learners with an intellectual disability. Through the program, learners have the opportunity to participate in a college-level class with unmodified learning outcomes. If successful, participants can continue their learning toward achieving a four-course certificate in their chosen area of study at Centennial College.

Literal Change, Toronto, ON

Program: *Literal Change Facility Program*

A team of trained teachers work one-on-one with the adult male learners in two maximum-security facilities to build level-appropriate basic literacy skills. The program was developed in response to an identified need in detention centres for remedial literacy. It works with a strengths-based approach to build learners' confidence and help them set realistic goals for positive re-entry outcomes post-incarceration.

Momentum Community Economic Development Organization, Calgary, AB

Program: *Momentum's Money Matters*

This financial empowerment program is designed to increase confidence and help participants with mental health and/or addition challenges successfully manage their money. The program provides important financial literacy education to an underserved and particularly vulnerable population in need of wraparound services.

Sioux-Hudson Literacy Council, Sioux Lookout, ON

Program: *Discover Online Integrate Information Technology (DOI2T)*

The program provides access to new and exciting technology while encouraging participants to learn at their own pace. DOI2T serves both existing learners and has also generated interest from new learners from Sioux Lookout and the thirty Indigenous communities in Northwestern Ontario. The program emphasizes technology-based learning that combines digital literacy and a hands-on creative component.

About ABC Life Literacy Canada

ABC Life Literacy Canada® is a non-profit organization that aims to strengthen organizations that promote adult learning by developing and supporting the use of high-quality introductory learning materials and resources written in clear language. We envision a Canada where everyone has the tools and opportunities they need to improve their literacy and essential skills. For more information on literacy and ABC Life Literacy Canada's programs, visit www.abclifeliteracy.ca.

About Great West Life, London Life and Canada Life

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