



**Breaking Through Boundaries**  
**2014 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY**

## Learners are at the heart of our work

Calgary Learns funding, professional development for instructors and capacity-building in the adult learning field all work to serve learners better. In our funded programs, learners build essential skills for life and work. We call this foundational learning. For each learner, these skills form a foundation for further learning, employment and for becoming a more engaged parent, neighbour or citizen.

To hear from learners directly is critical to Calgary Learns' ongoing assessment of community learning needs. In 2014, our staff had the pleasure of visiting 29 of our funded programs. We were repeatedly inspired by the stories and strengths of the learners we met and saw great variety in learners' goals—why they had come and what they wanted next.

Over the year we witnessed hundreds of learners breaking through barriers, connecting with others and taking charge of their challenges through learning. Eyes shone as learners described to us their newfound confidence and plans for the future. Calgary Learns is truly grateful to have had a role in their growing success.

## Learner Spotlight

We would like to introduce you to three of the hundreds of learners thriving in Calgary Learns-funded programs:

### Lonnie Dorchik

**Transitional Vocational Program, Mount Royal University**

While Lonnie has been a student in the Transitional Vocational Program (TVP) for 10 years, he is even more excited to come in to learn today. He is currently enrolled in Computers, Tutoring and Math/Literacy programs. Passionate about learning, Lonnie approaches all tasks with enthusiasm and laughter.

Lonnie takes pride in pushing his learning as much as he can and he embraces all learning opportunities. His current interests outside of classes include hockey, bowling, golf, pottery, the Stampeders and board games. He has utilized technology to expand his communication with family and friends. In addition to an ongoing blog, complete with photos and captions, Lonnie has created a home video of himself playing hockey in the Special Olympics.

Like many of us, Lonnie has to balance his work life with his pursuit of further education. Lonnie works at Home Depot but even after a long workday, he comes to class with a smile on his face. Through his infectious positive attitude, he encourages all other learners.

Lonnie has shown exceptional growth over the past year. He has become more independent in his work and willing to take on more challenging tasks. His personal learning goals, which are incorporated into his annual learning plan, reflect his desire to grow and apply his learning to everyday life.

Staff at MRU describe Lonnie as the life of the class, always willing to help those around him to make sure they are reaching their goals as well, "He is a bright light and he encourages others around him to become better people."



## Lieu Ngo

### Computer Enhanced Literacy Program, Bow Valley College

Born in Vietnam, Lieu had to drop out of school after grade 7 because of the death of her father. Lieu came to Canada as a refugee in 1981. She found work immediately as a seamstress and worked for the same company until it folded 29 years later.

Lieu and her siblings sponsored their elderly mother to come to Canada in 1985. They fully supported her for 10 years until she became eligible to receive a partial old-age security pension. Lieu continued to care for her mother until her death last year at 97 years of age.



Lieu has been a student in the Computer Enhanced ESL Literacy Program (CEELP) since January 2010. Over the past five years, she has focused consistently on improving her reading, writing and computer skills, and often practices on the BVC computers. While dealing with the challenges of her ailing mother as well as a mentally ill brother, Lieu has maintained almost perfect attendance in the program.

Lieu thrives in a learning environment and uses each new activity as an opportunity to further her fluency in English. She is an excellent role model for other learners through her eagerness to learn, her increasing self-confidence and her willingness to help others learn.

Lieu has taken full advantage of the CEELP to develop as a life-long learner. She actively participates in her multicultural community and is always willing to share her experiences and expertise. Her impressive journey of learning can best be summed up by one of her teachers, "Lieu is a joy to have in the classroom."

## Mike Keir

### Inside Out Theatre

Since childhood Mike has lived with cerebral palsy, a disorder which affects many areas in his life and requires him to use a wheelchair. Mike however has never allowed this life-long condition to stop him. He decided as a youth that he wanted to pursue theatre and acting, and this goal motivated him to enrol in Inside Out Theatre courses more than ten years ago. His excitement and joy in learning have led him to excel in increasing his skills in such areas as literacy, interpersonal communication and teamwork.



Mike is a natural story teller and comedian. He has used his education to grow into a highly effective communicator and powerful advocate for himself and his fellow learners. A generous performer, he knows how to encourage others to break through barriers. He has advanced so far in his studies of dramatic arts and theatre that he will be starring in a major two- person show this year.

Mike says that he has embraced life-long learning, and in return, is leading a happy and fulfilled life. The core of his contentment is based on such personal achievements as the learning skills he continues to build on, his camaraderie with his fellow learners and his unique ways of expressing himself.

As a result of his involvement with Inside Out Theatre, Mike has begun to volunteer with the Cerebral Palsy Society. He works at the front desk, interacting weekly with dozens of clients and staff. He says he volunteers now because he can, having gained the skills to help, contribute and give back.

## Integrating Foundational Learning

Our 2013 Needs Assessment and 2014 Community Consultation showed a need for targeted staff training. We heard:

- For adult learners to succeed, instruction must be learner centred. In foundational programs, it is critical to facilitate learning so that participants' needs and ideas help shape the content.
- Essential skills for life and work need to be incorporated into programs. Practitioners often described learners whose skill gaps necessitated shifts in programming to address these needs.
- Providing affordable professional development to community educators is a crucial strategy in helping agencies prepare their learners for success. Calgary Learns needs to support program development opportunities (like the IFL program) as well as training in learner-centered program design and delivery, and seminars on measurement and evaluation.

Calgary Learns listened closely to this feedback. With funding from The Calgary Foundation in 2014, we again offered the Integrated Foundational Learning (IFL) program, this time with some new features that reflect valuable feedback from previous IFL participants.

- The new modular design allowed participants to choose among the five workshops to receive relevant training to suit their needs.
- After staff completed the workshops, organizations that wanted to invest further in the enhancement of their programs applied to Calgary Learns to receive customized in-house training plus a literacy and/or essential skills mentor to help them apply their new learnings.
- Knowing that good facilitation skills are key, facilitation training was expanded to two workshops to allow program staff, especially new facilitators, to improve their skills.

### What is IFL all about?

Sometimes adult learners struggle with the content of programs. It's not usually because the content itself is too difficult. It may be because participants do not have the literacy and essential skills for:

- Reading handouts
- Communicating well with others
- Using computer skills to look for new information
- Breaking difficult problems into doable steps

The IFL program focuses on working with organizations that serve adults learning at a foundational level. IFL provides skills for staff (facilitators, coordinators, front-line workers) to understand their work differently in terms of literacy and essential skills. For most of them, their program delivery is content-based. The learners are coming to learn about a particular topic, for example parenting, getting tickets in trades for employment or being part of community kitchen. IFL helps facilitators and coordinators think beyond the course content they're delivering to determine the skills embedded within the content. In essence, IFL moves learning staff from thinking about their programs as content and knowledge to thinking of them as content, knowledge and skills.

We offered the IFL program again in fall 2014 with 9 workshops and 102 registrants representing 19 different organizations. Six of these organizations are continuing their learning journey with a mentor consultant who will help them make their programs work better for foundational learners. The outcomes of IFL are as individual as the programs that participate. Subtle changes often create powerful results, as can be seen in the following examples.

**The Drop-In Centre’s Employment Services Training** participated in a previous round of IFL. Their IFL case study\* clearly articulates the transformation of their program. They revised the program’s application form with prospective learners’ skill levels in mind:

	Goal	Changes made as a result of IFL	Impact on learners
Application Form (First step for clients to be considered for training)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use clear and simple language to communicate training options</li> <li>• Reduce the number of clients who are confused by the application form</li> <li>• Improve quality of responses by organizing and wording questions better</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where appropriate “you” was used in all instances</li> <li>• Contact information added at the bottom of each page</li> <li>• Additional “white space” created on each page</li> <li>• Length of application reduced by 1 page</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer questions about the application form even with our contact information clearly stated on each page</li> <li>• Higher application completion rate (less questions left blank)</li> </ul>

**SCOPE Society’s Integrated Community Kitchen** offers another example. A coffee run to Tim Hortons was already part of Cook Day activities. SCOPE staff turned this regular errand into an ingenious skill-building activity for their learners. See how they built it into the curriculum:

Job	Foundational Skill	Skill Details
Take orders for coffee/tea from Tim Horton’s	Document use Reading Writing Numeracy Oral Communication	Uses document to take complete orders Reads order form Writes order information in appropriate box on form Collects and counts money for drink order Counts out correct change (at Tim Hortons & Community Kitchen) Greets Tim Hortons counter staff and gives order

**SCOPE Timmy’s Run Prices: Small - \$1.20 Medium - \$1.64 Large - \$1.79 Extra-Large - \$1.99**

**Order Form**

Name	Drink				Size				Cream				Sugar			
	Coffee	Decaf	Tea	Special Drink	Small	Medium	Large	Extra Large	0 Black	1	2	3	0	1	2	3

\* See full IFL case studies in the report “Integrated Foundational Learning Phase II: Stories of Change” on our website: <http://www.calgarylearns.com/learning/projects#resources>. Watch for new case studies in early 2016.

DOCUMENT USE



In 2014 Calgary Learns allocated \$1,044,545 to remove financial barriers for adults which allowed:

**Initiative Grants**  
One-time grants to address emerging learning needs in the city. Our 4 projects in 2014 included research and materials creation, as well as piloting new learning opportunities.

**20 agencies to deliver 20,000 hours of facilitated adult foundational\* learning opportunities to 8,000 learners in 60 venues**

CONTINUOUS LEARNING



THINKING SKILLS



**Community Issues**  
Programs designed to address a community need through foundational learning for low-income adults.  
*"I have more self-worth and I believe now that you can do everything, just put your heart and soul into it."*  
*Women's Life Skills Program - Centre for Newcomers*

\*Foundational, in this sense, refers to the basic skills adults require to fully participate in life, their families, communities and jobs.

## Employability Enhancement

Programs designed to build basic essential skills to enhance future employment potential for low-income adults.

*"It [this course] has allowed me to start thinking about taking back my life."*

*Learning Education Enhancement Program - Calgary John Howard Society*

**DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY**

## Adult Basic Literacy

Reading, writing and numeracy up to a Grade 9 level for low-income adults.

*"It helped my family come closer. The kids know I care when they see me come to a program like this."*

*Community Literacy and Essential Skills Program - Further Education Society of Alberta*

## English Language Learning

Basic level English language courses for immigrants to Canada for low-income adults.

*"This course helped me to use the computer better, read more English words, know how to write more English words, and speak more English words and it has helped me to tell time on a clock better."*

*Computer Enhanced ESL Literacy - Bow Valley College*

*"[I learned] to set small goals and to plan my goals so I can reach my long term goals."*

*Literacy Program - Calgary John Howard Society*

**NUMERACY**

**ORAL COMMUNICATION**

**WRITING**

**WORKING WITH OTHERS**

For more information about our funding allocations, go to [www.calgarylearns.com/funding/funded-programs](http://www.calgarylearns.com/funding/funded-programs)

## Funders

Alberta Human Services  
 Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education  
 Government of Canada  
 The Calgary Foundation

## Sponsors

Bunch Projects  
 TD Bank  
 Young EnergyServe

## Volunteers who kindly donated their time & expertise

Board Members  
 Calgary Learns Marathon Team  
 Casino Volunteers

Funding Proposal Review Teams  
 LOLA Selection Committee  
 Ray Stockford - RDS IT Consulting Inc.

## Donors

Alberta Association for  
 Multicultural Education  
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Our work would not be possible without the Community Adult Learning Program grant from the Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education. Calgary Learns distributes 80% of this annual provincial grant to foundational adult learning programs in Calgary.



Don Bunch, of Bunch Projects, graciously sponsors our Life of Learning Awards celebration. The LOLAs recognize exceptional learners, educators and programs in the adult learning field. In 2015 we will launch our new "Thanks a Bunch" award to honour great funders like Don.



The Calgary Foundation invested in multiple programs throughout our city by generously funding Calgary Learns' Integrating Foundational Learning program (IFL), see page 3 & 4 for details. Funding came from the Foundation's Community Grants Program.



## 2014 Organizational Members

Agape Language Centre Society  
Bow Valley College  
Calgary Catholic Immigrant Society  
Calgary Chinese Community Service Association  
Calgary Immigrant Educational Society  
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association  
Calgary John Howard Society  
Calgary Public Library  
Calgary Scope Society  
Canadian Mental Health Assoc - Calgary Region  
Centre for Newcomers  
Coalition for Equal Access to Education  
Deaf & Hear Alberta  
Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre  
Families Matter Society of Calgary  
Further Education Society

Immigrant Services Calgary  
Inside Out Theatre  
Literacy Alberta  
Momentum  
Momo Dance Theatre  
Mount Royal University  
Sunrise Community Link Resource Centre  
Vecova  
Youville Residence Society of Alberta  
YWCA of Calgary

## 2013 Individual Members

L. Adams  
L. MacKenzie  
Board Volunteers  
Casino Volunteers



## 2014 Board Members

Brian Larson, President  
William McCormick, Vice-President  
Mumtaz Ebrahim, Past President  
Michael Andriescu, Treasurer  
Lorene Anderson  
Celia Osenton  
Marnie Schaetti  
Jeff Skipper  
Venkat Somasundaram  
Honey Watts  
Linda Williams

## Staff

Nancy Purdy, Executive Director  
Jeannie Finch, Grants Coordinator  
Nicky Peeters, Operations & Communications  
Clare Pludek, Bookkeeper

**“Learned nothing can scare me  
if we put our hearts in it  
and can take some steps.”**

Wisdom from a learner in the ABLE program  
(Adult Basic Literacy Education) at Bow Valley College

Calgary Learns entered 2014 ready to roll. We had just completed our 2013 adult foundational learning needs assessment. With this new road map, we eagerly began to incorporate the community’s recommendations into our strategic and operational plans.

The adult learning community had sent a clear message. Educators wanted to find better ways to serve diverse and complex adults who have foundational learning needs. Educators also wanted to learn with and from each other. In 2014, Calgary Learns worked to honour these requests by:

- Keeping the field informed about funding, programs, training and key connections through our newsletter and social media
- Opening our Integrated Foundational Learning program workshops to the community, resulting in 102 registrations in the fall of 2014
- Hosting a learning and networking session on measurement and evaluation where we shared Bow Valley College’s newly released “Learner Progressions Measures” research.
- Focusing our funding on holistic learner-centred adult learning programs

As the year progressed, Calgary Learns continued to gather input from members, learners and community leaders. Our staff visited 29 classrooms where they interviewed over 70 learners and program staff. We participated in many community initiatives and discussions across Calgary. These activities shaped our work, helping us understand the evolving learner needs, policy shifts and economic realities that affect this field.

We look forward to the road ahead. We are thrilled that the province accepted our December 2014 application for an Aboriginal Literacy and Foundational Learning grant. This new grant stream will support Aboriginal learners in their life journeys, honouring cultural contexts while building bridges to further learning and training. In 2015, Calgary Learns will also implement new granting guidelines recently announced by the province. We will work with our members to make this transition as seamless as possible.

Many players contributed to our success this past year. The annual Community Adult Learning Program grant from the Ministry of Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education enabled us to proudly grant over \$1 million to foundational adult learning programs in 2014. The Calgary Learns Board and staff were generous with their time and abilities. However, we humbly recognize that our success in 2014 again relied upon the dedication of the staff and volunteers in our funded programs. And, at the heart of all this effort, we find the learners themselves. Their courage and tenacity inspires us all.

Brian Larson  
Board President

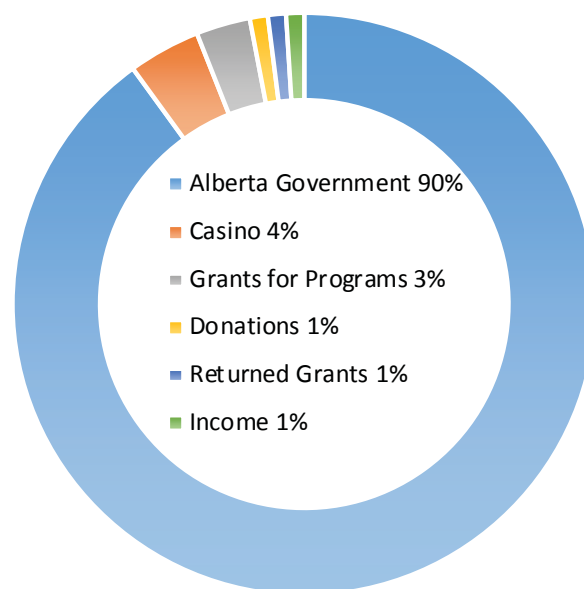
Nancy Purdy  
Executive Director

# Summary Financial Statements

## Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2014

	2014 (\$)	2013 (\$)
<b>Assets</b>		
Current Assets	1,240,724	1,218,464
Capital Assets	14,115	17,266
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>1,254,839</b>	<b>1,235,730</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
Current Liabilities	28,316	24,749
Deferred Contributions	1,039,929	1,036,044
Lease Inducement	13,605	19,235
Net Assets	172,989	155,702
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>1,254,839</b>	<b>1,235,730</b>

## Revenues

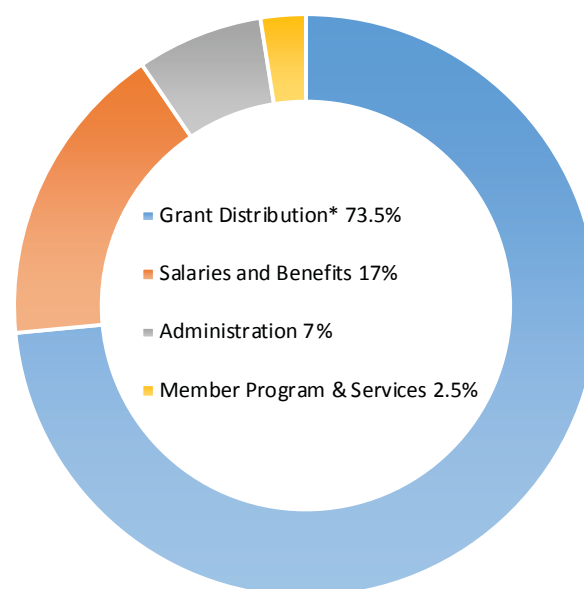


## Statement of Operations

### for the year ended December 31, 2014

	2014 (\$)	2013 (\$)
<b>Revenue</b>		
Alberta Innovation & Advanced Education	1,290,059	1,301,899
Other Income	150,911	203,898
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>1,440,970</b>	<b>1,505,797</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Program funding	1,044,545	1,039,669
General & Administrative	374,679	447,523
Amortization	4,459	2,850
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>1,423,683</b>	<b>1,490,042</b>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures</b>	<b>17,287</b>	<b>15,755</b>

## Expenditures



\* 73.5% dispersement includes 80% of our CALP grant

A copy of the complete 2014 audited financial statements is available through the Calgary Learns office.



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