



Connect activities to your learners' interests and needs. Be sure materials are authentic and relate to their lives.



If you can catch a learner's eye in that moment when they got a concept bang-on, nothing will ever be the same again. When your eyes meet, there is no going back. They have been seen being brilliant.



Start where your learners are at. Use their strengths, background and goals as a springboard to teaching foundational skills.



Provide learners meaningful practice opportunities to apply new skills in the classroom and in their lives.



Take time to get to know your learners. With relationship comes trust and a more relaxed learning environment.

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much” *Helen Keller*

The best way to describe 2018 is to say that it was crazy. It was incredibly busy and it had many challenges. Yet as we look back on it, Calgary Learns has reason to be proud. Throughout an often trying year, we demonstrated our strong resilience and unwavering commitment to serve the adult foundational learning community.

This year, we were sad to say goodbye mid-year to two key members of our staff, Jeannie Finch and Monique Fry. Jeannie, our Grant Coordinator, was part of the backbone of Calgary Learns for 25 years. Her commitment to and passion for the adult foundational field has been steadfast and continues to this day. After her departure in early July for health reasons, we were pleased that the community helped us celebrate her wonderful career and friendship with a surprise retirement book. Monique, our first Indigenous Liaison, moved to the United States mid-year. Thanks to her guidance and mentoring, Calgary Learns has an excellent foundation for our work serving Indigenous adult learners.

Being short-staffed might seem a crazy time to move offices, but when the perfect opportunity came up, we took it. We moved to a new space in July, and are very pleased to now have dedicated training space for our professional development work with the community.

Despite the challenges, 2018 also had many highlights, more of which are listed on the back page.

- Given the magnitude of the Minister of Advanced Education’s portfolio, we were delighted that Honorable Marlin Schmidt expressed deep interest in the Community Adult Learning Program. In July, he made it a priority to visit a number of funded programs and speak directly with learners. *[photo of Minister Schmidt with learners and staff of the CanLearn Society]*



- We welcomed Esther Elder as our new Grant Coordinator in October. She brings both extensive granting experience and her wonderful energy to our team.
- With the guidance of a local Indigenous working group, we completed the development and pilots of our Indigenous professional development project, Creating Ethical Spaces for Educators and Indigenous Learners.
- We applied for and received three-year funding from the Calgary Foundation to expand our work to better serve Calgary’s Indigenous community.

Throughout this time, we continued to provide grants to Calgary’s foundational learning programs. This is only possible because of the on-going generous support of Alberta Advanced Education. We are grateful for their continued confidence in us to steward the Community Adult Learning Program (CALP) grant for Calgary.

The past year definitely reminded us that the core strength of our work is people, which includes:

- The 8,521 learners who had the courage and tenacity to continue their learning journey
- The dedicated staff of the 33 programs we fund who make learning come to life
- The strong leadership of our 11 volunteer board members who took our governance to the next level
- The amazing staff of Calgary Learns who not only did exceptional work in their own roles, but went the extra mile as a team

We look forward to a productive, meaningful and a little less crazy 2019 as we continue to support the adult foundational learning field.

Honey Watts
Board President



Nancy Purdy
Executive Director



[photo of Minister Schmidt with learners and staff of the Calgary Immigrant Woman’s Association]



[photo of Minister Schmidt with learners and staff of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary]

Wisdom From the Field

If you had a colleague delivering an adult foundational learning program for the first time, what words of wisdom would you share?

That's the question Calgary Learns asked our members early in 2019. We received more than 50 tips from ten organizations*, and we thank them for generously sharing their wisdom.

These tips are both practical and philosophical. They are proof-positive that the practitioners we work with are perfectly positioned to understand the changing needs of learners, the complexity of the challenges they face, and the powerful potential of relevant learning opportunities.

We share this **Wisdom From the Field** with you in honour of adult foundational learners and practitioners everywhere. May you find it both interesting and useful.

Teaching reading is fundamental

It used to be that our work was called “adult literacy.” Although every effective program has always involved more than working only with reading and writing, it's now acknowledged that the work we do is centred on a broader set of foundational skills. Those skills include reading, but are not limited to it.

Nevertheless, being able to read well is absolutely fundamental. Limited reading skills are obstacles in the way of achieving learning and life goals. Good reading instruction paves the way to learner success. Many other skills—comprehension, problem-solving, decision-making, personal reflection, self-efficacy and empathy, to name but a few—are all part of reading.

As you teach your learners the reading skills they need, **Wisdom From the Field** reminds you:

- Learning to read is never a short-term mission. It is a journey.
- No matter how difficult and painful it is at the beginning, reading and learning to read can become interesting and joyful.
- It requires practice and persistence from the learner, and even more so from the instructor.
- Helping someone learn to read can be the most rewarding part of our work. It opens the door to all further learning, and truly changes lives.

Relationships trump content

When you take the time to build relationships with your learners, you generate the trust and confidence that lead to a relaxed and supportive learning environment. And in that kind of environment, learners thrive.

In fact, building caring relationships with your learners is the first and most powerful strategy for successfully facilitating adult foundational learning.

As you get to know your learners, **Wisdom From the Field** reminds you:

- We are more alike than we are different. Meet your learners as equals.
- Be approachable, friendly, and welcoming.
- Be genuine. You are a learner too, and this can give your learners hope. You too have probably had trouble with learning at some point. You can share stories of times when you felt challenged but stuck with it, and of what a difference that made to your life.
- Getting to know your learners will help you understand what they want to learn and how best to help them learn it.
- It's also important to build relationships with your colleagues. Working together and learning from each other will help you offer your learners the best possible opportunities for success.

Instructors create the space for learning

As an instructor, you create the physical learning space, and you also create the emotional feel of the space.

It matters how you greet and work with learners, how you model respect and compassion, how you encourage learning.

It matters that you love what you do. From that passion comes curiosity, which includes ongoing growth and development. Your excitement will spread to your learners.

And it matters that you know why you love what you do. There will always be days when loving your work may not be quite enough. On those days, knowing why you do the work you do will help carry you through.

As you consciously create the learning space, **Wisdom From the Field** reminds you:

- It is so important to listen—really listen with empathy—to your learners. Reference what they say to show you were listening.
- Be positive and reassuring. Learners consistently report that encouragement is what keeps them coming even when they think they can't.
- Be patient. Understand that it's difficult for some learners to even get to class, never mind take in information.
- Repeat and review. Learning one tiny skill thoroughly is more useful and rewarding than half-learning a multitude of skills.
- Remember that both instructors and learners bring wisdom. Expect that you will learn as much from your learners as they learn from you.

Help learners discover their own brilliance. If you can catch their eyes in that moment when they got a concept bang-on, nothing will ever be the same again. There is no going back. They have been seen being brilliant.

Have high expectations of yourself as instructor

Underlying all these tips from the field is the simple truth that how you teach is as important as what you teach.

Always remember that you're a learner too. Look for professional development opportunities. If you stop growing as a professional, your learners will stop learning.

As you work with your learners, **Wisdom From the Field** reminds you:

- Meet your learners where they're at—literally, educationally and emotionally. Offer learning opportunities in places that are convenient for them. Be aware of who they are as people, how they learn. Make sure you understand what being in a classroom or tutoring situation is like for them.
- Connect learning to the learners' needs. Follow their lead. Use their strengths, interests and background to teach foundational skills. Help them establish realistic goals that they can meet successfully.
- Model and demonstrate the new learning in action, and provide learners with the opportunity to practice and review.
- Make learning safe, and accept mistakes as part of it. Create the space to ask questions.
- Avoid assumptions about “common knowledge.” All knowledge is highly contextual and culturally informed.
- Challenge yourself to update your lessons and activities on a regular basis. Keep it interesting. Be creative. Plan for fun!

**Special thanks to our wisdom contributors: Aboriginal Futures, Bow Valley College, Calgary Immigrant Women's Association, Calgary Public Library, CanLearn, Carya, Catholic Family Services, Centre for Newcomers, Community Learning Network and Momentum*

CALGARY LEARNS IMPACT

(2017-18 funding cycle)

GRANTING:

\$1,574,094 was provided so that
8,521 financially-barriered adult foundational learners could receive a total of
10,346.75 instructional hours delivered by
33 funded programs

4,530

adults enrolled in Literacy and Foundational Learning (LFL) opportunities

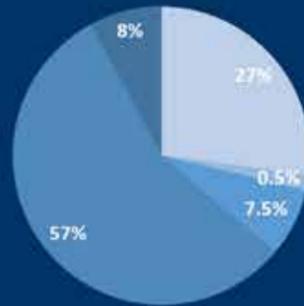
3,743

adults enrolled in Community Capacity Building (CCB) opportunities

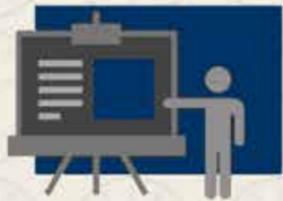
248

adults enrolled in programs that were offered through Initiative Grants

Adult Literacy 27%
 Numeracy 0.5%
 English Language Learning 7.5%
 Basic Digital Skills 57%
 Foundational Life Skills 8%



NUMBER OF INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS:



Literacy and Foundational Learning (LFL): **5,447.5**

Adult Literacy: 1,367.25
 Numeracy: 160
 English Language Learning: 1,652.5
 Basic Digital Skills: 1,026
 Foundational Life Skills: 1,241.75

Community Capacity Building (CCB): **4,483.5**

Initiative programming: **415.75**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:



27

professional development workshops offered or funded by Calgary Learns



434

practitioners attending those workshops



9

professional development workshops customized for specific organizations

Professional Development

2018 was the first full year that Calgary Learns had professional development funding from Advanced Education (AE). This funding allows us to build the capacity of the adult foundational learning field by having a staff member dedicated to supporting the community through:

- The delivery and/or coordination of public workshops
- The delivery of customized workshops to our funded programs
- Coaching and mentoring opportunities with funded programs
- Organizing opportunities for practitioners to network and share ideas

This work supports Advanced Education's Provincial Professional Development Outcomes Measurement and Evaluation Framework. AE's professional development investment includes grants to Rural Routes, Community Learning Network, ECALA (Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association), and Calgary Learns. Feedback from the Calgary community is proof-positive of the value of this investment by AE.

Advanced Education's Ultimate Outcome 1: CALP staff acquire knowledge and skills they need from PD

- The focus on audience. Sometimes we become too focused on the overall look, impressive vocabulary, etc. Instead of asking ourselves "Did I do it right?" ask "Can the reader understand this?" and "Does it answer the reader's questions?" *Plain Language Workshop participant*
- It's such a concrete and practical activity [portfolio assessment] and fits perfectly with the needs and lives of my learners. A portfolio is a building activity and that is essential and valuable for my learners, all of who are rebuilding their lives. *Portfolio Assessment Workshop participant*
- Thinking about the context of goal-setting and the continuous nature of the process. *Goal Setting Workshop participant*
- The strategies I learned and experienced, I will definitely apply them in my facilitation. *Advanced Facilitation Workshop participant*
- Hearing about how other individuals/organizations are using (or struggling with) evaluation. *Evaluation Workshop participant*
- It increased my knowledge of adult learning. *IAFL Workshop participant*
- The clarification of expectations and purpose of application questions. *Application Workshop participant*

Advanced Education's Ultimate Outcome 2: CALP funded staff are actively engaged in professional communities

- Hearing great ideas from the community. *Goal Setting participant*
- The discussions! Thank-you for giving us time to talk and share ideas and resources. *Portfolio Assessment participant*

Advanced Education's Ultimate Outcome 3: CALP funded staff are leaders and actively shape the CALP PD System. Some great suggestions for Calgary Learns future PD.

- More literacy foundation training skills/tools and literacy resources.
- I would like a one-on-one consultation on how to apply this in my specific program.
- I would like more of these trainings as the more I attend such workshops, the better I will deliver as it's with practice
- Informal plain language groups that meet and discuss issues and challenges and can network.
- Workshop reunions – love this idea. I think it would be great to reconvene later and compare notes with the group.

Granting

Calgary Learns invests in adult literacy and foundational learning opportunities that aim to transform lives.

This past year was a significant one for our competitive granting program as we implemented changes in the Community Adult Learning Program (CALP) guidelines, which resulted in a review and update of our RFP, Application, Budget, and Program Outline/Outcome Measurement Evaluation forms. We were pleased to support our funded programs through a smooth transition of these changes by offering both workshops and one-on-one meetings.

“Every success story is a tale of constant adaption, revision and change” – Richard Branson

Adult learners are diverse, have different strengths, interests and goals. We are inspired by the changes they experience as a result of their learning. Calgary Learns believes that nothing tells the story of impact better than the learners themselves:

“I amaze myself”

“Right from the start it was a welcoming group and I felt a part of it”

“For the first time in two-years since arriving to Canada, I was able to fully participate in my learning and be independent of other family members when it came to communication”

“[I liked] learning the literacy skills... [it gets] me ready to further my education”

“You can’t go through life improvising everything”

“This course motivated me each week to get out of my place and come”

“[This program] opened my eyes to new opportunities, even with a criminal record”

“As a result of my self-confidence increasing from [the program], I joined Parent Council at the school. I never would have had the confidence for that.”

“[This program] opens a new world for me”

2018 Life Of Learning Award Recipients



Adult Learner:
Rose Lewis (centre)



Learning Champion:
Evelyn Tait (centre)



Learning Communities:
Successful Young Parents,
Families Matter Society of Calgary



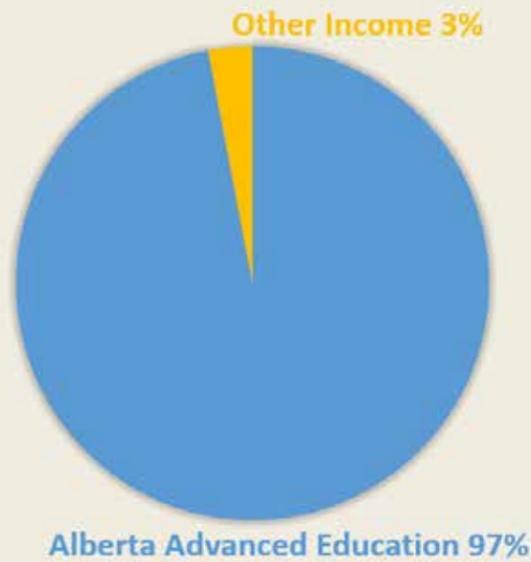
Thanks A Bunch:
ICE NGX Intercontinental Exchange



Learning Communities:
Digital Literacy in the Community (DLIC), Calgary Public Library

Financials

REVENUES



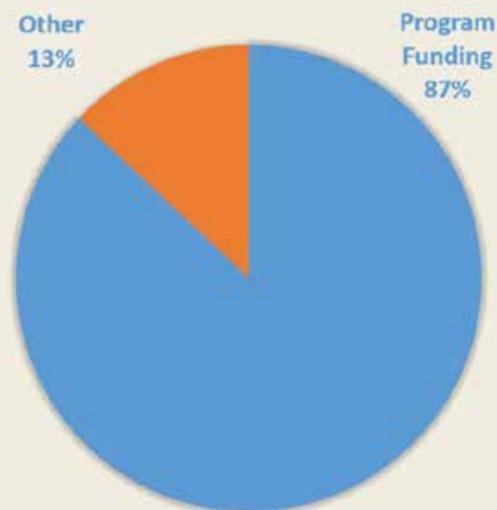
Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2018

	2018 (\$)	2017 (\$)
Assets		
Current Assets	1,183,343	1,652,881
Capital Assets		2,646
Total Assets	1,183,343	1,655,527
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current Liabilities	36,590	23,095
Deferred Contributions	908,309	850,480
Program Commitment		566,762
Lease Inducement	5,110	2,646
Net Assets	233,334	212,544
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	1,183,343	1,655,527

Statement of Operations for the year ended December 31, 2018

	2018 (\$)	2017 (\$)
Revenue		
Alberta Advanced Education	2,476,887	2,451,018
Other Income	64,216	54,185
Total revenue	2,541,103	2,505,203
Expenses		
Program Funding	2,195,533	2,072,046
General & Administrative	322,134	394,958
Amortization	2,646	4,310
Total Expenditures	2,520,313	2,471,314
Excess of revenue over expenditures	20,790	33,889

EXPENDITURES



Our work was made possible due to the generosity of our funders, donors and volunteers. Thank you!

Organizational Members

Aboriginal Futures Career & Training Centre
 Bow Valley College
 Calgary Catholic Immigrant Society
 Calgary Chinese Community Services Association
 Calgary Immigrant Educational Society
 Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
 Calgary John Howard Society
 Calgary Public Library
 Canadian Mental Health Association – Calgary Region
 CanLearn Society
 Carya Society of Calgary
 Catholic Family Service Calgary
 Centre for Newcomers
 Closer to Home Community Services
 Deaf & Hear Alberta
 Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary
 Families Matter Society
 Further Education Society of Alberta
 Immigrant Services Calgary
 Inside Out Theatre
 McBride Career Group Inc.
 Momentum
 North East Family Connections
 Pathways Community Services Association
 Sunrise Community Link Resource Centre

Individual Members

B. Burggraf* M. Schaetti*
 John Couto* C. Sauter*
 S. Eaton* H. Watts*
 L. Jarman* J. Wilkinson*
 V. Salt* R. Wong*

* Board member

Funders

Alberta Advanced Education
 Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission
 Calgary Foundation

Sponsors

Bunch Projects



Donors

J. Hansen
 PricewaterhouseCoopers
 Trail Appliances
 United Way of Calgary, Donor Choice Program

Donation of Workshop Space

Families Matter
 St. Mary's University
 Sunalta Community Hall
 The Alex Homebase

Volunteers who donated time & expertise

Board & Committee Members
 Casino Volunteers
 Funding Proposal Review Teams
 LOLA Selection Committee
 Ray Stockford - RDS IT Consulting Inc.

Staff

Nancy Purdy, Executive Director
 Esther Elder, Grants Coordinator
 Jeannie Finch, Grants Coordinator
 Monique Fry, Indigenous Liaison
 Nicky Peeters, Community Relations & Operations
 Terri Peters, Professional Development Specialist
 Hilary Taylor, Bookkeeper



Calgary Learns Board or Directors and Nancy Purdy, Executive Director



Calgary Learns staff and Ben Hartt (Advanced Education)

A copy of the complete 2018 audited financial statements is available through the Calgary Learns office.