

MEETING NEW CHALLENGES, IN CLASS & IN THE COMMUNITY



DARTMOUTH LEARNING NETWORK
SEPTEMBER 2019 TO JUNE 2020

Celebrating Learning 2019–2020

108

Adult Learners

20

**Essential Skills
Participants**

21

**Tutor-Learner
Matches**

35

**GED Tests
Passed**

15

**Adult Learners
Advancing within ALP**

15

**Families in Family
Literacy Workshops**

Message from the Board Chair



Having carried the title of Board Chair for all of one month, I would like to take a moment to recognize Outgoing Board Chair and current Vice Chair, Jordan Landry's contributions. Jordan's leadership exemplifies how small changes can have big impacts. Under her

direction we looked inward as a board and made changes to how we operate that allowed for greater accountability to you, our stakeholders, and more time for us as a board to focus on improvement and growth as an organization. Thank you, Jordan!

This year has been an exceptional year at Dartmouth Learning Network. Just a few of the highlights include the launch of our annual awareness and fundraising event, The Ultimate East Coast Quiz Show, which saw local celebrities and audience members compete in a series of

fun quiz-show-like activities; investment in research-proven structured reading resources and training to support our tutors and staff in meeting the needs of our learners at all levels of literacy; and tremendous growth and community engagement at our fourth annual Family Literacy Day celebrations.

I'd like to thank our volunteers, staff, funders and partners within the community for their ongoing support and engagement in literacy. Each of you plays a pivotal role in our ongoing efforts to ensure that everyone has the skills they need to reach their learning and career goals.

*Jennie Sanford,
Chair, Board of Directors*

2019 – 2020 Dartmouth Learning Network Board Members

Jennie Sanford, Chair; Jordan Landry, Vice Chair
Phil Pelrine, Treasurer; Janice Kenney, Secretary

Current Directors: Cheryl Driscoll, Doris Fox,
Zoë Mitchell, Trevor Nichols, & Evelyn Williamson.

Other Directors who Served this Year: Olga Manzoni

Message from the Executive Director



We had a phenomenal year at Dartmouth Learning Network. Once again, our learners are the highlight. Because we've had such a close knit group of learners this year, our classes have remained full at a time of year when we usually see fewer people. And, our learners saw results! We saw marked improvement in learner skills

thanks to the efforts of our instructors, community learning coordinator and tutors who grew their knowledge and comfort level with respect to structured approaches to learning, planning for learning, and assessing learning.

It was truly humbling to sit back and watch so much growth happening all at once.

While COVID-19 has significantly impacted our momentum, it serves as a humbling reminder of what's

truly important in life. It has allowed us a different lens through which we can explore new paths forward. For us, we are taking advantage of this opportunity to explore how we can make learning options more accessible, efficient and effective for everyone.

*Respectfully submitted,
Alison O'Handley, Executive Director*

Dartmouth Learning Network Staff

Alison O'Handley, Executive Director
Karen Janik, Administrative Assistant
Amanda Sabo, Instructor/Essential Skills Coordinator
Amanda Stoddard Gillett, Instructor
Brent McPhee, Instructor
Gail Thistle, Community Learning Program Coordinator
Marcia Franklin, eLearning Project Team Lead
Katie Purdy, eLearning Programmer/Instructional Design
Joanna Hilchie, Event Planner

Communications

In Level 1 Communication we retraced our footsteps to the early stages of literacy, fostering our letter-sound correspondences. We used a multi-sensory approach that included mats, mirrors, phoneme cards, magnetic letters, mini white boards, and finger tapping. We are becoming more confident in sounding out, reading aloud, and writing our ideas without much help.

Some learners enjoy online reading programs like [Reading A-Z](#) to help build their comprehension.

In Social Studies we learned some historical facts about [the Bluenose](#), before and after our trip to Lunenburg. During [African Heritage Month](#) we learned a lot more about Viola Desmond and her legacy.

In Science, we focused on nutrition and better understanding the Canada's Food Guide. We were fortunate to have the [Community Health Team](#) present to us a few times on



Above: tapping into our artistic side



Left: learning how to stretch a dollar with the Community Health Team



Lower left: learning about the Bluenose in class and on location

how to stretch our dollar to make simple healthy meals at home. For fun, we tapped into our artistic side as we learned about sequencing, sketching, tracing, brush strokes and blended colours with [stepbysteppepainting.net](#).

In Level 2 Communication we tried to unmask the logic of English by dissecting words into morphemes, syllable types, and phonemes (sounds).

We looked at the history of English and how Greek, Latin and German influence our words today.

Our literature started with a novella called *Wenjack*, the story of Chanie "Charlie" Wenjack, whose death sparked the first inquest into the treatment of Indigenous children in Canadian residential schools.

We travelled to Egypt both virtually and via [the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History](#) to understand the process of mummification and traditions around burial there in comparison to ours.

Towards spring we were becoming more independent in our studies, deciding which pre-GED subjects to focus on, working in small groups and considering topics for science projects.

*Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Stoddard Gillett, Instructor*

Investing in Research-based Methods to Enhance Our Learners' Literacy

This year we introduced Orton-Gillingham principles and resources into our Level 1 and Level 2 Communication classes. Using this tested approach based on scientific evidence of how the brain learns to read, we noticed improvements in learners' confidence in spelling and reading in just a few short months.



Math

Level 1B Math: We focused on strategies to improve memory and recall to become more confident in counting, adding and subtracting without being dependent on the abacus, number lines or charts. Learners are getting much better at estimation, recognizing and using patterns, counting change, dotted numbering, and skip counting. Since we've moved online, a couple of the learners have been introduced to online math games like Quizlet to practice their skills in a fun way.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Stoddard Gillett, Instructor

Level 1C: This is where we start to make sense of math. One of the first things we learn about is number sense. Number sense is "a well organised conceptual framework of number information that enables a person to understand numbers and number relationships and to solve mathematical problems that are not bound by traditional algorithms." Try saying that five times fast.

After this, we moved into what I like to call the meat and potatoes of math: the operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division). We used Simultaneous Oral Math and lots of drills to cement these equations in place for future use.

After operations, things got real. Well almost. We used

fake money but real grocery flyers to study consumer math and budgeting.

One of the last things we did together was a geometry project. Each student picked a shape and researched information on their shape. I was so impressed and proud of the projects and presentations.

Respectfully submitted,
Brent MacPhee, Instructor

Level 2: After a brief review of number operations and lots of drills, we learned about my favorite F-word: fractions. Here's a fraction for you: 7/9ths of the class preferred decimals to fractions, so they were relieved when we finished fractions and started decimals. Can you imagine the groans when I told them it was time to turn decimals into fractions?

Once we had enough of decimal-fractions we moved into percentages, where I told them that a percent was basically another fraction. Those fractions just don't go the blazes away.

Life is a lot like math in the sense that you get to choose how you're going to solve the problem, and quite often in math it will involve a fraction.

— *Respectfully submitted,*
Brent MacPhee, Instructor

Essential Skills

Essential Skills Level 1:

Unit One on self-discovery saw learners begin work on their portfolios. They learned about how they learn and completed career-focused assessments.

As 2019 was an election year, we learned about citizenship and the democratic process in Canada. This included a visit from Elections Canada and a trip to the [North Grove](#) for a roundtable with local candidates. The class bonded through practice, directing their own learning and investment in social learning. They solved real life problems, facilitated a healing circle, and learned about mindfulness.

Two learners from this class had been creating art and jewellery as a hobby and were natural additions to the DLN Boutique. They led their own “businesses” during our Open House in December and even made some money! Others in this class participated by making bath and body items.

Essential Skills Level 2:

Like Level 1, the Level 2 class developed a skills portfolio, beginning with content from the self-discovery unit. They delved deeper into the democratic process, participating in a project to compare and contrast party platforms.

With a particular interest in workforce skills, this group regularly used the [Labour Market Information website](#) and focused on soft skill development to supplement hard skills like resume and business writing. We read case studies and filled out surveys on soft skills like motivation, attitude, self-esteem, time management, and communications. Over winter, learners completed

presentation assignments and excelled at the research phase, the Google Slides presentation, and the final speech portion.

To instill soft skills like active listening and empathy, we facilitated a weekly sharing circle. Learners were encouraged to submit ideas for the circle to a jar and we would begin class with a talking stick, ground rules and stories.

At our Open House in December, this class was responsible for the operations

Left: the DLN Boutique at our December Open House. Below: learners went to the North Grove for a roundtable with local candidates in the federal election.



of the DLN Boutique, including inventory, branding and marketing, signage, cash and e-transfer instructions, and transformation of our classroom to a storefront.

Lastly, with the onset of COVID-19, digital technology and materials sent home allowed this class to maintain their learning and weekly Google Hangouts meetings allowed them to check in and ask questions.

*Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Sabo,
Instructor*

All Essential Skills participants benefited from training in First Aid, Workplace Etiquette, and WHMIS 2015. They also learned a lot through presentations from [Elections Canada](#), the [Community Health Team](#) and [Nova Scotia Works](#).

Computer Classes

Computer Basics:

Learners enter this class with a wide variety of motivations to use digital devices. We began the year by establishing email addresses and ensuring passwords were saved in a safe place. Directed by their self-assessment and learning plans, we set up a routine. Before class, Bob, a DLN volunteer, helped learners set up laptops and practice typing skills. Then learners replied to an email sent by the instructor to help develop automaticity—this proved vital when we shifted to working from home. Eager for information, they learned to use keyboard shortcuts to assist their own work and wrote definitions of computer vocabulary as they learned it. They also used Google Docs to edit and format template documents.

For the duration of the in-class time we shared, learners gained confidence in using email, social media, Google Drive, touch typing assignments and games. Learners with more advanced skills assisted the instructor in making this bustling room more organized and effective.

During COVID-19, learners adapted to an online world and many used virtual technology for the first time. This was our largest group online and their eagerness to learn demonstrates the growing importance of digital literacy in our daily lives.

Right: trading in classrooms and white boards for Zoom and iPads. The skills gained in Computer Classes made it possible for learners at every level to transition to online learning when the COVID-19 lockdown began. Sadly, not all have access to the internet or technology.

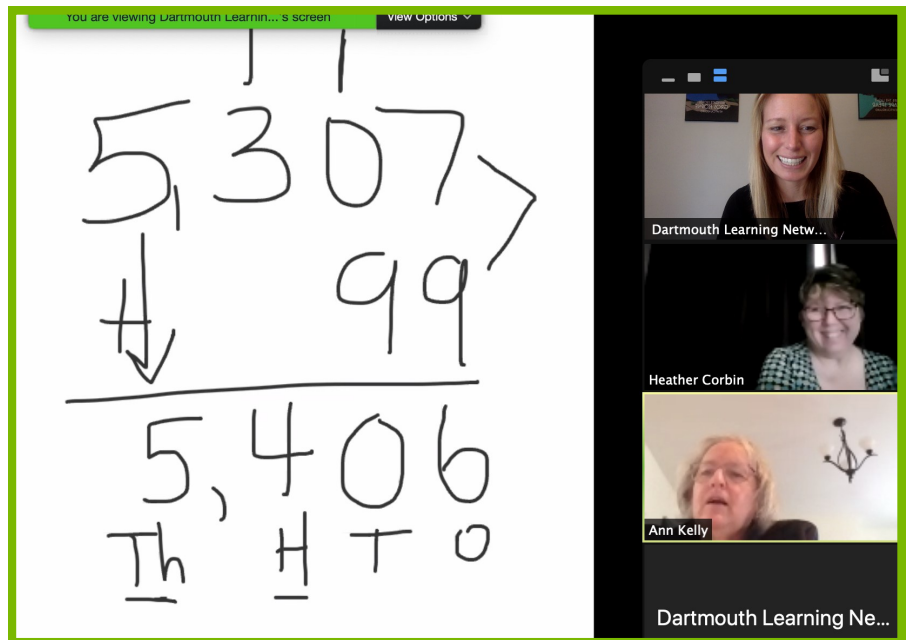
Computers for Work:

In this class much of the learning was directed by questions learners posed or technology concepts that interested learners were curious about. As a result, learners in this class had lots of opportunities to challenge and grow their digital skills.

They gained comfort and familiarity using G Suite, including Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms, and Sites. They also learned to customize their Google profiles and change privacy settings. Learners practiced using a file manager and control panel tasks to organize personal laptops. They also explored internet security, including email phishing, social media privacy and how to best use commonly targeted websites such as those used for streaming new movies and the risks that can come with it.

With a DLN volunteer and peer volunteers to support learning, this may have been the noisiest class this year but it was full of peer-to-peer learning about the fun and practical uses of technology.

*Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Sabo,
Instructor*



The Confidence to Pursue Further Education

A Learner Success Story by Shawn Neves

I dropped out of high school in Grade 10, when I was 17 years old. It was not the smartest thing I could have done, but I thought I knew everything at that point. My parents gave me three options: go back to school, get a job, or move out. I have worked 29 years since that day.

During my breaks as a stock boy for James F Lahey Glass, I'd go to the back room, where the glaziers fixed old wooden windows or newer aluminium ones. I'd watch, occasionally asking why they were doing things a certain way. When there was no one around, I'd take a little piece of glass out of the scrap bin and try to cut it. Before long, I was one of the glaziers. I did that for around 12 years.

I also worked for Industrial Cold Milling Ltd for 15 years. I started at the bottom and worked my way up, the same way I did as a glazier; watching, asking questions, and then doing.

It was hard work with long hours and I wasn't getting any younger. I decided to go back to school. My girlfriend pushed me to do it. I had procrastinated for 10 years prior.

In the winter of 2018, with the help of the Dartmouth Learning Network, I finally earned my GED diploma. The staff there are amazing, going above and beyond what they need to do to help you succeed.

I liked the evaluation during our first meeting, because it gave me a sense of where I was and where I needed to go. I always had a hard time with English, but my instructor Brent MacPhee showed me a few ways to brainstorm ideas, and that helped immensely with passing my GED writing essay.

The Dartmouth Learning Network showed me that I was selling myself short. They gave me the confidence to go back to school. I am currently attending [NSCC](#) and upgrading to take the Architectural Engineering Technician program in September of 2020.

I have never been happier. I wish I had done this years ago. Remember, you are never too old to follow your dreams, you just need to go for it!

At left: Shawn Neves



GED

Our GED class sees the highest interest from learners each year but also the highest attrition rates. So, we invested a lot of time and thought into how we could be more flexible to the needs of our GED learners.

We considered the needs and interests of our typical GED learners: they want to learn at their own pace; each one comes with strengths and deficits in their learning history and requires an individualized strategy or plan to achieve their learning goals; having access to an instructor in real time who can help direct their learning and troubleshoot challenges is very important to the GED learner; but, when they join our GED class it is more for a quiet, focused space to learn than for group instruction.

From other GED instructors, we gained insights into the best order and approach to navigating learners through GED prep resources and tests and how to know when a learner is ready to write a GED test. We then mapped out a step-by-step learner pathway to help our learners manage their learning. For each step we identified additional resources to complement and enhance their learning, and established realistic timelines for completion. This individualized approach to support our GED learners will set us up for success as we turn our attention towards building our knowledge and skill in engaging learners through a blended or distance learning model.

Moving On Up

[Moving On Up](#) is our free and interactive eLearning platform for adult basic education.

We are pleased to report that more and more people are finding us online. Over the past year, the Moving On Up e-learning platform saw 1.5 times more first-time visitors and 1.4 times more new user registrations.

Last year we reintroduced our [My Front Yard](#) basic literacy and grammar resource on Moving On Up. Each month we identify the most popular lesson on the site—this year, that lesson was one from My Front Yard for six out of 12 months. Looking at the lessons attempted by visitors to the site, visitors to Moving On Up are seeking out basic literacy/grammar content almost equally to math content.

This year, we've been working very hard and are almost ready to launch two new features on Moving On Up: a learning management platform so that instructors can monitor their learners' activity on the site and a GED math practice test. Looking forward to telling you all about these exciting new additions next year!

A Message to our GED Learners

Obtaining a GED certificate is one of the most rewarding things that you can do for yourself. I have seen many people earn the GED and let me tell you, it's life changing. People talk about feeling more fulfilled, happier and proud to prove to everyone that they could do it!

To everyone who obtained their GED certificates this year, I'm proud of you; you did it. Not only did you rise against the odds and complete something that may have appeared impossible, but you also survived my dry sense of humour in class. For the rest of you who have passed some of the tests but not all, I'm sorry, I don't get any funnier. And no, it doesn't get any easier. But, you can do it! Keep doing your best work, and soon enough, you too will have your GED certificate.

*Best wishes,
Brent MacPhee, Instructor*

DLNMOVINGONUP.CA

Why People are Using
Moving On Up
FREE & INTERACTIVE E-LEARNING FOR
ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

**1.) ALIGNS DIRECTLY WITH
NS CURRICULUM**
Progress in Moving On Up equals
progress towards an adult high
school certificate or equivalency
(e.g., GED).

**2.) INCREASES FEEDBACK &
INDEPENDENT LEARNING**
Adult learners get immediate
feedback and reduce their
dependence on the instructor.

**3.) FACILITATES
DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING**
Instructors get the flexibility they
need to meet the diverse needs of
multiple learners in the classroom.

**4.) MAKES LEARNING MORE
ACCESSIBLE**
Learning can happen anytime,
anywhere with a computer or
mobile device and access to the
internet.

**5.) BUILDS CONFIDENCE IN
ONLINE LEARNING & TEST
TAKING**
Adult learners gain confidence in
an online learning environment
and are better prepared for online
test taking (e.g., GED).

DARTMOUTH LEARNING NETWORK
dartmouthlearning.net
dlnmovingonup.ca

Community Learning Program

More than 30 volunteers supported our learners during a successful — though shortened — year for the Community Learning Program (CLP). We had 15 one-to-one matches as well as six volunteers working in our classrooms. Volunteers also supported our learners during educational field trips, potlucks and community events. One particular highlight: one of our CLP learners

participate in training before being matched with a learner. All eight demonstrated eagerness to support our learners and dedication to promoting literacy in the community.

We must also acknowledge the level of volunteer participation in professional development opportunities this year. Eight training sessions in the form of workshops and conferences were well attended by our volunteers. Four of our volunteers also worked on the [NS Literacy Practitioner Training and Certification](#). We're pleased to report that volunteer tutor Tina Prosser Cameron completed the training and will receive her certificate at the Literacy Nova Scotia conference next November.



Above: Gail and tutor Hilde Carson.

Right: HRM recognized tutor Bonie Moore for more than 30 years of volunteerism in the community



successfully obtained the GED she needed to secure a promotion. We are very proud of all of our learners who worked so hard during this shortened academic year. Congratulations on a job well done!

Eight new volunteer tutors joined our DLN family this year: four were matched with learners within weeks, two supported learners in the classroom and two chose to

During Volunteer Week this year, the Halifax Regional Municipality recognized our very own volunteer tutor, Bonie (Conrad) Moore for more than 30 years of volunteerism in the community. Congratulations Bonie and thank you for your continued service!

DLN is very fortunate to have such kind, compassionate and dedicated volunteers supporting our programs and our learners through their learning journeys. A heartfelt thank you to each and every volunteer for sharing your time and talents with us. Your contribution is appreciated much more than you know!

*Respectfully submitted,
Gail Thistle, CLP Coordinator*

DLN Volunteers

Lynne Anstey
Patricia Bornhym
Sarah Brothers
Brent Bowdridge
Dave Campbell
Hilde Carson
Tyler Colbourne
Daniel Cox
Mandy Crew
Gayle Cromwell
Linda Daley

Allan Duquette
Rosalyn Erskine
David Ferguson
Nancy Fong
Linda Forward
Alecia Green
Mary Beth Hardy
Venice Johnson
Melanie Kelly
Karen King
Bob Lacey
Sharon MacIntosh

Ed MacKenzie
Tatiana Martins
Nick McGrath
Diane McGuirk
Dale Molenaar
Bonie (Conrad) Moore
Wayne Morris
Paul O'Flaherty
Tina Prosser-Cameron
Margaret Rockwell
Monica Romero
Nancy Walters

DLN Volunteer of the Year 2020

The Dartmouth Learning Network Volunteer of the Year Award is given to a volunteer who not only helps us work toward our vision and mission, but also contributes to our learner, volunteer and staff community.

This year we recognize **Tina Prosser-Cameron** for her tireless efforts and dedication to her role as a volunteer tutor. When it comes to providing learning opportunities for her learner match, Tina's creativity is second to none! She combines her learner's interests with community activities to help increase literacy in practical ways. From shopping trips to the grocery store, field trips to a nursery to talk about plants, or developing menus for special family meals, Tina is always thinking outside the box.

Her enthusiasm for her own learning also knows no bounds. She consistently participates in DLN training events and collaborates with DLN staff around teaching methods and strategies. Through continued hard work and dedication, Tina completed the [Literacy Practitioner Training Certification](#) this year, a



learning experience which she highly recommends. DLN congratulates Tina on a job well done!

Tina continues to step up to contribute to DLN special events and celebrations, contributing her favourite dishes to potlucks and sharing ideas for workshops. She always makes herself available to other volunteers to share her tutoring experiences and to learn from others. Tina has also increased her own knowledge of vital services in the community that are important to our learners and gladly shares them with those who need them the most. She is not only a mentor, but an advocate for DLN programs, services and learners.

Tina is thoughtful, kind, engaging, enthusiastic, supportive, patient, accommodating and always colorful in both appearance and personality! She is a ray of sunshine on the darkest of days and a true inspiration to the volunteer community! DLN is very fortunate and truly blessed to have such a dedicated volunteer on our team.

Sandra's Story

I was a high school dropout (after spending three years in Grade 7). I made it through life yet I always wanted to read but couldn't. One day at church I mentioned that I wished could read so I could understand what people were talking about. My friend suggested that I could go back to school. I told her I already tried and it didn't work. But then she gave me a phone number to the Dartmouth Learning Network and said go ahead give them a call anyways. Well, I did!

I was very nervous and scared, uncertain that they would be able to help me. Gail and the staff at DLN were so friendly and warm I knew that I was on the right path. Right away Gail set up someone to tutor me and we were to meet the very next week. Excited yet uncertain again, that's when I met Mandy. Mandy was so full of encouragement and a friendly warm smile to learn with. I knew we would be able to work well together.

Mandy met me at my level and kept digging until we found where we had to start. She made me feel that I was able to achieve my goals. Mandy made learning fun and exciting. I couldn't wait to see what we'd be doing next.

My life has changed so much. I have confidence when I read and that has made a big difference in my life. I actually understand what I am reading! I never knew how much enjoyment I could get out of reading. I stayed focused on my purpose and now I can read, and I would like to say Thank You to the Dartmouth Learning Network for helping me...and Mandy, you are awesome!



Learning in the Community

Summer L.E.A.P.

In the summer of 2019 we were fortunate to offer a Summer L.E.A.P. program—Learning through Exploration, Activity and Project-based learning. Our learners toured local museums, parks and community resources, volunteered in the community and worked on projects of interest to them throughout the summer. This project was funded by the Government of Nova Scotia's [Department of Community Services](#) and was put in place to provide structured activities and learning opportunities for our learners over the summer months.



Speak Up, Show Up!

In the lead up to the recent federal election, our DLN gang joined folks at [North Grove](#) for Speak Up, Show Up!, an all-candidates event. Learners took part in a “kitchen table” style discussion, asked the candidates questions, and let them know what's important to them.

Fall Field Trip: South Shore

Learners travelled to the South Shore in October for the much anticipated Fall Field Trip. First stop, the [Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic](#) in Lunenburg, where they learned about our fishing heritage. Next stop was [BernArt be aMAZEd](#), where they explored paths through a unique art maze.

Winter Field Trip: Pier 21 & the Museum of Natural History

Learners embraced our cultural identity and ancient history on our winter field trip to the [Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21](#) (pictured at top of page) and the [Museum of Natural History](#) (pictured at left).

We learned about the newcomers to Canada who passed through Pier 21, created badges representing our own cultural identity, and were thrilled by the display of Egyptian mummies and ancient Egyptian artifacts. At 32(!) learners, volunteers and staff, this was our largest field trip ever!

Thanks to [Literacy Nova Scotia](#) who supports our field trips through funding from the [Government of Nova Scotia](#) and to [Can East Mobility Scooter Rentals](#) who made it possible for everyone to come along.

Special Events



Above: Tree Trimming & Open House

Left: The Ultimate East Coast Quiz Show

Halloween Potluck

Halloween is always a special time of year at Dartmouth Learning Network. Colourful costumes, raised spirits (no pun intended) and a bounteous potluck featuring a diverse array of delicious food make every Halloween one for the books. This year was no exception, with lots of smiling faces and full bellies.

The Ultimate East Coast Quiz Show

Dartmouth Learning Network hosted The Ultimate East Coast Quiz Show, a fun (and funny) kitchen-party style night of drinks, games, and trivia November 15th at [Volta](#). Guests were invited to compete onstage against some of Halifax's most beloved personalities or to simply sit back, grab a drink, and enjoy the show. Special Guests included: everyone's favorite meteorologist [Cindy Day](#); Halifax's unofficial geek mascot [Fat Apollo](#); and [Hello City Improv](#). Thanks to the great vision and planning of board

members Jennie and Trevor and everyone's hard work, the event netted us \$1,700! Thanks to [Moosehead](#) for sponsoring the event, Volta for the space, [Halifax Inflatables](#) for the popcorn machine, and [Teejohnny](#) and Natalie Wentzell for the photography.

Tree Trimming & Open House / Christmas Potluck

Dartmouth Learning Network would like to thank everyone who joined us for our Tree Trimming & Open House on December 12th. We very much enjoyed meeting new friends and visiting with old ones. Lots of hot chocolate, apple cider and cookies were consumed and our learners were over the moon with all of their sales through our DLN Boutique. A week later on December 19th, staff, learners and volunteers tucked into perogies, smoked salmon dip, gumdrop cake and much more at our annual Holiday Potluck.

Dartmouth-Burnside Community Job Fair

We had big plans for our 5th annual Dartmouth Job Fair (DJF) 2020 event and were saddened to have to cancel due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Some of the exciting changes that we made were the change in name from Dartmouth-Burnside Community Job Fair to Dartmouth Job Fair, the requirement for a business to have open jobs which they are actively trying to fill in order to participate, and the introduction of speed interviews where job seekers would engage in on-the-spot interviews during the three-hour event. So fast paced, so noisy...so fun!

We also made great strides in developing our business and job seeker resources. We've been successful at engaging HR people from all levels of government to help people figure out how to land one of those great jobs for themselves.

Our DJF Organizing Team looks forward to implementing these plans for 2021 with new considerations for the health and safety of both employers and job seekers. Save-the-date for April 15th, 2021.

Family Literacy

Raising Readers Math Thinkers as a Community is a series of family literacy workshops and materials that help parents and caregivers to gain the attitude, knowledge and skills needed to raise readers and math thinkers. We break down the process of 'teaching our children' into easy to understand and practical steps, show parents how they can incorporate 'teaching' into their day to day activities with their child so that it doesn't feel like work, and provide them with tools and resources to support and guide their efforts as their child grows and develops from ages 0 to 4.

This year we partnered with the [East Preston Family Resource Centre](#) and the [North Grove](#) to deliver workshops in the community reaching 15 families.

Our **Books 4 Kids** initiative allows us to spread the love of reading in the community.

Thanks to [First Book Canada](#) who sources children's books on our behalf and to the [Farrell Benevolent Society](#) who covers the costs of shipping we were able to distribute children's books to families participating in the North Grove's young family suppers, Farrell Hall's annual holiday gathering, and our annual family literacy day event.



Celebrating Family Literacy Day

Always a highlight of our year, we worked with organizations in the Dartmouth North community to host our fourth annual **Family Literacy Day Event** in partnership with the [Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Halifax](#). With the help from Dartmouth North community agencies, we demonstrated the numerous ways in addition to reading and math that families could have fun with literacy. These included introducing culture, physical activity, and cooking/food preparation into the mix.

Highlights included free book giveaways, family portraits by [TeeJohnny](#), creating hands-on artwork with Boys and Girls Club program [Share The Art of Reading](#), mixing up yummy snacks with [the North Grove](#), reading circles with [Frontier College \(Nova Scotia\)](#), learning about Mi'kmaq culture with Vanessa Copage, and an Elephant & Piggie puppet show by [Halifax Public Library](#) staff. Live storybook characters Winnie the Pooh and CID the Service Dog made an appearance much to the delight of all ages thanks to [the Village on Main Street Business District](#). We were thrilled to see attendance double and to be featured on Global TV's Morning Show with Ashley Field who reported from the Boys & Girls Club.

Thanks again to our community literacy partners and volunteers from DLN who were a key component to this year's success. Mark your calendar for Saturday, January 23rd, 2021 to celebrate Family Literacy Day with us.



Thank you

On behalf of our learners and volunteers, the Dartmouth Learning Network staff team would like to say a big THANK YOU for your support.

The [Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education](#) and [Literacy Nova Scotia](#) supported us through funding for our programs and services. Our Dartmouth Learning Network Bridge Club raised funds to help cover the extras not eligible for funding. The [Farrell Benevolent Society](#) and [First Book Canada](#) supported the acquisition of children's books that were distributed in the Dartmouth North community. And, the [Rotary Club of Dartmouth](#) contributed funds towards our kitchen renovation which allowed us to purchase one of our prized possessions: a dishwasher, so that no one has to fight over who's doing—or not doing—the dishes!

Thanks to the [Dalhousie University School of Medicine's Service Learning Program](#), the [Nova Scotia Community College Business Administration program](#), and [Nova Scotia's Job Creation Partnership](#), we acquired valuable volunteer and work placements to support our efforts.

As well, a number of local companies provided financial and in-kind support to ensure that we had what we needed. These include [Daley Progress](#), [Robotnik](#), small business consultant [Nick McGrath](#), and [CanEast Mobility Scooters](#).

Lastly, thank you to all of our partners in the community who refer learners to us, who promote our programs and services, and who work strategically with us to provide adults and their families with opportunities to gain the essential skills needed to live and work in a modern economy.



Anna's Story

My name is Anna Loppie. I'm 47 years old and I grew up in Uniacke Square. I finished grade 10. I didn't like math that much, but I wanted to learn to read and write.

In my 20s, I lived with my aunt, who helped me out with my two girls. I volunteered at Saint Joseph Elementary serving milk and cookies to each class.

I knew I wanted to do something with my life, so I talked to a lady from the YMCA and she told me about a program with Dartmouth Learning Network. I was excited to go back to school! I didn't know how to read when I first went there or how to spell.

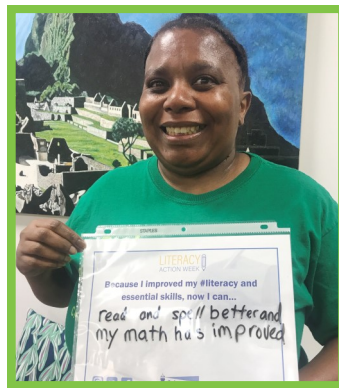
In Communication class we would go over words and practice our spelling. I started reading more and getting involved by helping with the community space and making friends with new learners so that everyone felt welcome.

Learning to read has built my confidence a lot. I am able to read many things on my own that I couldn't before, like menus, forms, story books, and flyers. I'm getting better at phonics, sounding out bigger words and I know more

about spelling rules. I had a hard time coming up with a simple sentence before, but now I can write my ideas on paper and check my writing for mistakes.

At Dartmouth Learning Network, I am well known for lending a helping hand to anyone who needs it and love decorating for the holidays. I make coffee for everyone in the mornings and smoothies for break time. When we had the food program, I helped purchase the groceries and loved learning new recipes and cooking with the staff and students.

On Mondays, I volunteer by reading books to children through a [Frontier College \(Nova Scotia\)](#) program that is operated in partnership with the [George Dixon Centre](#). I love working with kids!



Dartmouth Learning Network recognizes the support of the Province of Nova Scotia.

We are pleased to work in partnership with the Department of Labour and Advanced

Education to deliver and promote Adult Learning Programs for Nova Scotians.

