



30 years serving the Ottawa community
Annual Report
2009 – 2010

“I have special learning needs that are difficult to meet in an ordinary education program. I can have trouble keeping up... My difficulty in high school has led to gaps in my understanding that prevent me from accomplishing what I would like.”

Dylan - **also** student

*“**also** (they) provides the one on one attention needed along with the caring and support.”*

Wanda Lee - **also** student

*“**also** helps me by pushing me when I need to be pushed and helping me when I need help.”*

Andrew - **also** student



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“small organization doing great things...”

We have had another successful year at **also**.

During the 2009-2010 year there have been a number of changes at **also**. In July 2009 we were approached by MCTU and asked if we could take on the Deaf stream LBS program. After much careful consideration the Board and staff agreed to welcome the D/deaf and hard of hearing literacy learners into our program. We are learning about the Deaf way and are very happy to be working with the Deaf community. We have maintained funding from the City of Ottawa for the **also** Children’s Program. These funds, combined with the grant from the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU) provide the framework for new opportunities for us to strengthen both adult and family literacy into the foreseeable future. **also** is grateful to both funders for this invaluable support.

We are proud of our unique adult and family literacy programs. This year we served 101 adult learners (87 English stream and 14 Deaf stream) and over 150 families.

We continue to support **also** students participating in the Community Works curriculum and pre employment placements. Building on the success of this program we applied for and received Field Support funding from MCTU to begin the *Pathways Project*. Pathways will link students to local employers for paid on-the-job placements. We hope to receive continued funding to support the development of this project. The **also**Kitchen continued as a resource for literacy and nutrition through the offering of 6 cooking workshops and 2 informational workshops for students. In partnership with the Lowertown Community Resource Centre and the City of Ottawa, we participated in the Women Alive program offering weekly fitness classes to women from **also**, Heartwood House and the Lowertown community.

We developed and piloted the *Side by Side* project. Side by Side allows parents and school aged children to learn together in our program. The goals of this project are to increase parents’ skill and confidence better enabling them to support their children through the school year and to increase children’s skill and confidence allowing them to feel more comfortable asking for help at school and more comfortable doing homework with their parents. Thank you to Raise A Reader – The Ottawa Citizen Literacy Foundation for their support.

Another family literacy project that we piloted this year is the *Upgrading for Parents of Preschoolers (UPP)* in partnership with Kingston Literacy. This pilot was a big hit in our program. 8 learners from the English stream program, 1 learner from the Deaf stream program and 2 learners from our RAPP partner site at York Street school participated.

The *Reading and Parents Program* continues to thrive. We worked with 6 partner sites this year – the Ottawa Inuit Children’s Centre, Lowertown Community Resource Centre, York Street School, Vanier Community Resource Centre, Overbrooke Forbes Community Resource Centre and Heartwood House.

With the support of our **also** teachers, Denise Deshaw and Gord Stephen, we launched 5 new ASL videos on our website. Thanks to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for the funding to complete this project.

The **also** Children’s Program has provided four full days of literacy and language enriched child-care for low-income families who attend programs at Heartwood House. Both the Reading and Parents Program (RAPP) and the Children’s Program welcomed an increased number of community volunteers to assist in program delivery. This year our volunteers found us through the 2nd Ottawa TimeRaiser event as well as Volunteer Ottawa.

Local community partnerships are an integral and much valued part of our work. Lowertown Community Resource Centre ran programs in the Children’s Room, and the Sexual Assault Support Center (SASC) continued their Women for Women group. The ACElinks partnership with People, Words and Change, The John Howard Society and Algonquin College continues to support opportunities for higher level learners to gain access to college and apprenticeship programs. We continued providing opportunities for **also** students to participate in Community Works, in partnership with Heartwood House. The Vanier Community Resource Centre provided much needed funds for the RAPP program. We are grateful for their ongoing support. Much thanks to Culinary Conspiracy and the **also** teachers for their role in the **also**Kitchen’s cooking workshops. Thank you to Harold Crabtree for the funding to support this initiative. We especially value our association with Heartwood House and the OCCL and the information and referral opportunities these relationships afford.

also has an increasing number of volunteers, who contribute significantly to the success of our program. Numerous **also** students manage our Reception Desk. Dedicated community volunteers facilitate the RAPP Program, assist with child-care in the Children’s Program, provide administrative and librarian support, and last but not least are essential to the success of **also**’s Annual Amazing Book Race. Thank you to Mark Underwood and Starbucks for your ongoing support. For 2009-2010 we thank over 100 volunteers for their essential and valuable support.

also staffing remained stable through 2009-2010. We welcomed our new teacher, Mike to the **also** staff team were very happy to welcome back Isobel as a teacher during Eva’s maternity leave. The Health and Safety Committee worked conscientiously to develop the Health and Safety Policy. The Board maintained its commitment to a comprehensive Health Benefits Plan for all staff with Manulife Insurance.

Thanks are due to the Board of Directors for their dedication and on-going support. They all worked tirelessly and are indeed **also** Champions. Much thanks to our Book keeper, Lori Cobb for all of her hard work. This year was a learning year for us and I am deeply grateful for her kind nature and excellent work ethic.

This year has been another busy year. The staff and Board embraced the Deaf program with enthusiasm spending time learning ASL and participating in Deaf Culture workshops. The English stream students as well spent time participating in ASL learning and were open to the new student group. Thank you to Carole Fowler, Lois McIntyre and Denise Deshaw for your willingness to work with us, your sense of humour and your gifted teaching. The Deaf students came in with open minds through a difficult time of change. The closing of the Ottawa Deaf Centre has left a hole in the Deaf community. I hope they are able to open their doors again. The new Deaf teachers are wonderfully accepting and creative significantly contributing to the success of the program integration. I am daily impressed with all of the teachers. Thank you for your continued hard work, your optimism, your deep well of empathy, your sense of humour and your dedication to **also**. I feel very grateful to be working with such a wonderful group of people. We are very fortunate to have such a highly qualified, creative and dedicated team. Thank you everyone for another successful year. Onto the next.....

Kim Oastler
Executive Director