

NEXT STEPS

THE NEWSLETTER OF **ALSO** | ADULT AND FAMILY LITERACY IN OTTAWA




ADULT AND FAMILY LITERACY
ALSO

Spring 2023

Kim's Comments

This Spring we are exploring legacy giving. We had an incredibly generous bequest over the winter and realized that this is an area we haven't really talked about or explored. It is hard to know what to say. Death is not easy for many of us to talk openly about. My mom passed away just over a year ago. When we knew she would not get better we had many of those very hard conversations with each other, with the doctors, and with the palliative care team. Not easy. For me, having those conversations opened something up between my mom and me. It allowed for grace in our relationship and a tenderness that surprised me. I learned things about my mom that I never knew. I imagine it was the same for her. I am grateful, so grateful that we had those talks. She also had the opportunity to make decisions about her material things. She was able to tell me why she wanted to give certain things to certain people and what was important to her.



I know that ALSO plays a significant role in helping the adults and families we serve make changes and move towards creating a better life. For some, our small program makes all the difference. For others, we are a helping hand on the way to their next step. For still others, we are a welcoming and caring place to keep coming back to for support with skill development as they struggle to put their lives back together.

If you, or someone you love, has been impacted by ALSO, I encourage you to consider legacy giving by leaving a bequest for ALSO in your will. Bequests can play a vital role for small, charitable organizations like ALSO. More to come on that.

Wishing each of you the very best this Spring.

Be well,
Kim Oastler
Executive Director, ALSO

Success Story

Everyone had to pivot during the pandemic. The last almost 3 years has been a time of change for all of us.



As a result of the pandemic, ALSO had to adapt to remote learning and reconsider how we deliver our services. Maintaining remote learning as an option for students has allowed us to reach a larger community and work with more students who wouldn't otherwise have been able to access the support our program provides.

Paige is one of those students. Paige lives in a small community about an hour from Ottawa. She needed individualized support in order to continue her education and be successful. She did not have access to adult learning services that met her needs; however, she was able to enrol with ALSO and work remotely. Through our partnership with Continuing Education, Paige was able to earn her two remaining high school credits and successfully graduate in March 2023. This is a huge win for Paige.

Many of our students now choose to work remotely because of where they live, involvement with the criminal justice system, or mental health issues impacting their ability to attend programs in person.

Paige is our success story this Spring. Wishing her the very best for her next steps! Congratulations Paige.

ALSO Happenings



Welcome to Muhammad Ali. He is our new Deaf Literacy Practitioner. Ali is working remotely from Toronto. He has great experience teaching ASL and English language skills. We are happy to have him as part of our team. **We said good-bye to Sonia.** Sonia taught in ALSO's Deaf Adult Upgrading Program for 2 years. Sonia is an exceptional teacher. She cares deeply about her students. She will be missed.



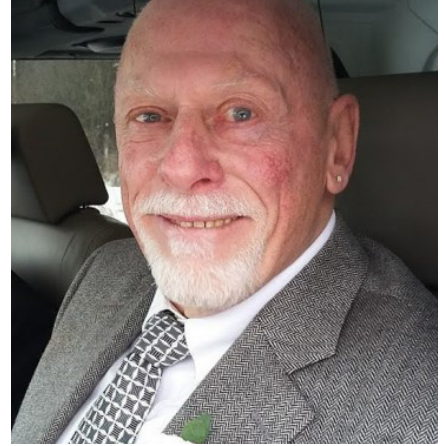
ALSO received funding from the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development as part of the Skills For Success project, to offer **Digital Literacy classes** to newcomers and unemployed or underemployed adults over 45 years of age. Eduardo and Simone will be teaching these sessions in June/July and again in October/November. We will be reaching out to the community soon, with more information.



ALSO had the honour of presenting to 100 Women Who Care. What a wonderful group of women. We are **very grateful** for their support and appreciate the time and financial resources each of these amazing women give to the Ottawa community.

Get Involved

William Lowe joined the ALSO Board of Directors before I started working at ALSO. When I started in 2004 as a Family Literacy Coordinator, Bill was the President and continued in this role for several more years. Bill was a dreamer. He was an optimist, but was also very pragmatic when it came to leading the ALSO Board. He always seemed larger than life to me. You knew when he walked into a room. Bill was a terrific support for our Executive Director at the time, Isobel Bisby. They remained friends until he died. His vision and leadership helped ALSO become the organization it is today. When he died, Bill left a generous bequest to ALSO and Heartwood House; two organizations he was passionate about for over 25 years. We didn't know that he named ALSO in his will.



As of December 2023, we will no longer have funding from the City of Ottawa for our Children's Program. This is not a reflection of the value our Children's Program offers, but rather changing funding priorities at the City and Provincial levels for community childcare programs. Bill's gift has allowed us to keep this program open, through to the end of our 2023-2024 fiscal year. This is significant. It buys us time to raise funds and offers stability for our staff and the families we serve.

Legacy giving is often about wanting to have a lasting impact and expressing a passion for a cause. Legacy giving enables individuals to transform something or create an impact or fulfill a mission that is bigger than themselves. People tend to keep their wills and estate planning very private. Over the last 30 years, charitable giving has been declining. We, as a sector, need to start having these conversations with our donors and supporters. If you are interested in exploring this further, I would be very happy to talk with you.

We are very grateful to Bill for naming ALSO in his will. To learn more about legacy giving with ALSO, please call 613 233 8660 or email kim@also-ottawa.org.

DONATE TODAY!

Kim

ALSO ChangeMaker

Joyce Chamas

This Spring I want to highlight one of our ALSO Board members, Joyce Chamas. She is our ALSO ChangeMaker. Joyce joined the Board of Directors last year. She brings a wealth of financial knowledge, as an accredited financial advisor, in addition to her infectious enthusiasm and energy.



Over the last several months Joyce has taken on the task of leading our fundraising committee, in support of our Children's Program. We are raising funds to keep this program running for the children and families we serve. This is no small undertaking! Joyce is a 'force for good' and we are very grateful to her. If you have time to give and are excited about event planning, please reach out. We are a small, but mighty group and are hoping to recruit 1 or 2 new members for the fundraising event committee this Spring. You will work with Joyce and Kim on a few very exciting events over the next 12 months.

Thank you Joyce for taking this on! Sending a huge shout out to Joyce, our ALSO ChangeMaker!

Contact Us

Phone: 613-233-8660 **E-mail:** kim@also-ottawa.org

Address: 404 McArthur Ave, Ottawa, ON K1K 1G8

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