

Literacy Promotion Awards 2015

As part of International Literacy Day, the Tri-County Literacy Network recognizes individuals' contributions to literacy in the tri-county area of Chatham-Kent, Sarnia-Lambton and Windsor-Essex. On an annual basis one individual from each county or municipality is recognized for his/her promotion of literacy.

Chatham-Kent Recipient:

Recipient of the Literacy Promotion Award 2015 for Chatham-Kent

This year, in Chatham-Kent, we would like to recognize the contributions of **Dave Demers**.

Dave Demers has been an esteemed member of the Tri-County Literacy Network Board of Directors since 2009. In that time he has taken on executive positions such as Treasurer and Vice-President. In his career with Chatham-Kent Employment and Social Services he has been a tireless promoter of literacy and adult upgrading. He hosts the "Opening Doors to your Future" workshops for Ontario Works clients. Recently Dave took a critical role in the Steering Committee for the Learning to Earning video series. He was involved as an active member in several key meetings and arranged for client involvement in the video series. His contribution to the series is evident in the final product.

In his role as Ontario Works' caseworker he has been a mentor and role model for countless individuals. Dave supports his clients' diverse needs every day, but his knowledge and commitment to learning is evident most in the number of referrals he has made to LBS programs in Chatham over the years. As a member of the Tri-County Literacy Network Board of Directors he has supported the network members with his knowledge of Ontario Works as a critical community partner. Dave constantly has a positive word and a smile, he is an excellent Ambassador for LBS in Chatham-Kent.

Sarnia-Lambton Recipient:

Recipient of the Literacy Promotion Award 2015 for Sarnia-Lambton

This year, in Sarnia-Lambton, we would like to recognize the contributions of **Anne Marie Cosford**.

Anne Marie Cosford has been an active promoter as well as leader in literacy and learning in Sarnia-Lambton and beyond. She has served on the Tri-County Literacy Network Board for nine years from June 2004 to June 2013, including providing leadership as the Vice President for four years (2007 to 2009 and 2011-2013), President for two years (2009-2011) and Past President for two years (2011-2013). Anne Marie has been a dynamic member of the Chatham-Kent and Sarnia-Lambton Local Planning and Coordination Group since 2003. As a member of the Chatham-Kent and Sarnia-Lambton Local Planning and Coordination Group, Anne Marie is always sharing suggestions, ideas and information to assist all members. She also

takes on leadership roles as a facilitator and/or presenter at outreach and professional development events. Her energy and enthusiasm are contagious! Anne Marie is also willing to take on new roles or tasks and was involved as a participant in Tri-County Literacy Network's recent Learning To Earning videos. As Manager of the Lambton College's MyCareer and Employment Ontario Programs (which includes Employment Services and the Academic Upgrading Program), she continually encourages and supports referrals within Employment Ontario and with Ontario Works.

As a result of Anne Marie's participation on the Board, she helped shaped the strategic direction for the Tri-County Literacy Network including the Network's leadership role as the hub for the sharing of best practices of service coordination, referral protocols, information and resource sharing and customer service, which continues to today. Her active participation in the Local Planning and Coordination meetings has impacted positively upon the content and approach for professional development workshops and activities as well as assisting other members and agencies in their work. Her positive outlook, support and respect for the people in her programs and the other agencies/programs she works with shines through in the Tri-County Literacy Network's Learning To Earning videos. These videos and Anne Marie's tireless efforts to encourage service coordination have resulted in increased awareness and referrals.

Windsor-Essex Recipient:

Recipient of the Literacy Promotion Award 2014 for Windsor-Essex

This year, in Windsor-Essex, we would like to recognize the contributions of **Rob Colicchia**.

Rob Colicchia has been a Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Instructor at the Unemployed Help Centre for approximately nine years. Some of Rob's most admirable qualities are his total commitment, dedication and enthusiastic outlook towards his learners. He often goes above and beyond his normal responsibilities by providing a well-rounded, goal focused program for each of his learners. He regularly provides community and in-house referrals to encourage and enhance his learner's academic, employment and personal lives and takes a genuine interest in assisting each learner to be better prepared for their future. While at times his classroom is breaching capacity, Rob still makes sure to give each learner as much one to one assistance as needed. Rob also plays a major role in the training and ongoing mentoring of our volunteer tutors in the classroom. Rob enjoys food and any reason to celebrate as demonstrated in his organizing of several potluck lunches each year. He also attempts to recognize each learner's birthday in some small way, as well as acknowledging other special events in their lives. Rob's unique talent is for developing a community in his classroom. Learners come and go, but the sense of family he creates is always there.

Rob values the importance of literacy and numeracy skills. He understands that a solid learning foundation makes a world of difference when setting a course for successful and productive futures. As a teacher, he openly shares his knowledge, expertise and his love of learning with each and every one of his learners. As a caring male and empathetic role model, Rob inspires his learners to treat each other in a respectful and understanding manner. To further support these attributes, he incorporates lessons and activities in the classroom that promote human rights, cultural awareness and diversity and teaches the harmful effects of discrimination in our society. Rob has taught hundreds of learners over his tenure at the Unemployed Help Centre and continues to hear updates and well wishes from past learners about how he profoundly changed their lives and raised their self-confidence to make them a better person.