



# 2024 Annual Report

## Introduction

The Peter Gzowski Foundation for Literacy (PGFL) is pleased to present this annual report.

The PGFL, created with an endowment from the federal government, was established following the death of Peter Gzowski in 2002. The PGFL supported the Peter Gzowski Invitational (PGI) golf tournaments, which Peter created in 1986 to raise awareness and funds for literacy. The PGFL continued support for the PGIs until 2022.

In 2022, we recognized the Foundation's endowment could be used in other ways to continue to support literacy activities. The Board of Directors decided to end the PGIs and, beginning in 2023, to carry on Peter's vision by using the PGFL endowment funds to provide grants.

2024 saw the second year of the PGFL Grants Program. This year we moved to an online application platform, SurveyMonkey Apply, which helped streamline the entire process. We held a nation-wide call for proposals and reviewed 55 applications. We were pleased to fund 16 projects this year. Thank you to everyone who applied and those who were selected. Your commitment to improving literacy skills in this country is strong.

We welcomed three new members to the Board of Directors – Amadeo Ventura, Mary Ruby and Scott Walter. I'd like to thank the Board of Directors for all their efforts this past year. Thanks to their volunteer hours we were able to complete the 2024 granting cycle.

Thank you to Eric Plato for bookkeeping services, Ashley Ibrahim and Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP for corporate support and Tracy Guinchard, REP Here in Canada, for technical support.

Thank you all.

Brigid Hayes

Chair, Peter Gzowski Foundation for Literacy

## **Peter Gzowski Foundation for Literacy Board of Directors**

### **Brigid Hayes – Chair**

Ottawa, ON – Consultant, strategic planning and policy development adult literacy and skills. Formerly, Canadian Labour and Business Centre and the National Literacy Secretariat, HRSDC.

### **Fiona Bramble – Director**

Victoria, BC – Founder-CEO, REP Here in Canada and managing editor of Here Magazine. Member of Creative BC Magazine Advisory Committee and the Greater Victoria Alliance for Literacy. Former ELL educator.

### **Meghan Dillon – Secretary**

Toronto, ON – Intellectual property lawyer, specializing in trademarks. Formerly worked in book publishing, negotiating author contracts.

### **Alison Gzowski – Director**

Toronto, ON – Gzowski Family representative for the Board, writer, editor, producer, and event organizer for non-profits.

### **Deb McInnis – Director**

Moncton, NB – Executive Director of the United Way of Greater Moncton and Southeastern NB Region. Formerly Executive Director for Laubach Literacy New Brunswick. Member, Greater Moncton Literacy Advisory Board, and a volunteer for the Children’s Wish Foundation for over 25 years.

### **Leah Patry – Treasurer**

Toronto, ON – Enjoyed a more than 25-year career in finance, the majority of which was spent as a global equity portfolio manager at one of the country’s largest pension funds. Most recently provided financial expertise to institutional clients within the global asset management division of one of the country’s chartered banks. Currently, Chair of the Friends of Bon Echo, a fundraising and advocacy group for the provincial park.

**Mary Ruby – Director**

Toronto, ON – Former Chief Administrative Officer and legal counsel for a global entertainment technology company. Over 30 years experience in corporate governance, legal, HR, real estate and facilities operations. Past Chair of a women’s crisis centre in Collingwood, Ontario.

**Scott Walter – Director**

Ottawa, ON – Over 35 years’ experience working in the literacy/education sector domestically and internationally. Recently stepped down as Executive Director of CODE (Canadian Organization for Development through Education); previous positions include Team Leader Education at CIDA; Director, International Development at International Literacy Association; Chair of the Global Book Alliance.

**Amadeo Ventura – Director**

East Garafraxa, ON – A transformational strategist with over 14 years of experience in community development and engagement. Proven expertise in leading nonprofit organizational growth and management of complex projects. Currently working in the arts and mental health sector as Executive Artistic Director at Workman Arts.

# Remembering Peter Gzowski

## Founder of the Peter Gzowski Invitational (PGI)

For three hours a day, five days a week, for 15 years, millions tuned in to CBC Radio's Morningside to listen to Peter Gzowski talk with Canada from coast to coast to coast. His insightful yet informal interviews with everyone from the Prime Minister to a chili sauce expert was one reason the award-winning broadcaster, author and journalist was often referred to as Mr. Canada. What many might not know is the legacy he left outside of his broadcasting life.

The Peter Gzowski Foundation for Literacy (PGFL) recognizes and honours the work of the late Peter Gzowski in raising awareness and funds for literacy. Peter devoted the last 16 years of his life to raising awareness of adult literacy issues. The PGFL supported his PGI ("Peter Gzowski Invitational") fundraising events, held across the country for 37 years, ending in 2022.

The PGFL continues to support Peter's legacy and his passion for, as he once put it, "playing for a better world," by providing grants to literacy groups to support their work.

## PGFL Grants Program

The 2024 PGFL Grants Program was launched February 19, 2024, with applications due March 22, 2024.

The PGFL Grants Program is open to registered charities delivering adult or family literacy services at the local level. Three types of projects were supported in year 2:

Projects that:

1. **build capacity** within an existing literacy program:
  - Curriculum development
  - Tutor or practitioner training
  - Development of a new approach within an existing literacy program
  - Efforts to expand the program to reach new learners
2. describe and evaluate existing programs to share and promote **promising practices**:
  - Evaluation of an existing practice
  - Research into what works and why
  - Sharing of promising practices
3. support **operational expenses**:
  - Costs associated with operations including salaries, rent, IT, office supplies, personnel and volunteer recruitment.

The call for proposals resulted in 55 applications which went forward for review. Sixteen projects were funded at \$20,000 each for a total expenditure of \$320,000.

## PGFL GRANTS PROGRAM STATISTICS – 2023 - 2024

Province/Territory	2023			
	All Applications		Awarded	
Alberta	7	19%	3	30%
British Columbia	11	31%	3	30%
Manitoba	1	3%		
National	0	0%		
New Brunswick	1	3%		
Newfoundland & Labrador	1	3%	1	10%
Nova Scotia	3	8%		
Northwest Territories	0	0%		
Nunavut	0	0%		
Ontario	9	25%	3	30%
Prince Edward Island	1	3%		
Quebec	1	3%		
Saskatchewan	1	3%		
Yukon	0	0%		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

% Awarded vs Submitted	36		10	28%
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2024			
All Applications		Awarded	
11	20%	6	38%
8	15%	1	6%
2	4%	1	6%
1	2%		
2	4%		
1	2%	1	6%
1	2%	1	6%
1	2%		
0	0%		
24	44%	6	38%
0	0%		
2	4%		
1	2%		
1	2%		
<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100%</b>

55		16	29%
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Total To Date			
All Applications		Awarded	
18	20%	9	35%
19	21%	4	15%
3	3%	1	4%
1	1%		
3	3%		
2	2%	2	8%
4	4%	1	4%
1	1%		
0	0%		
33	36%	9	35%
1	1%		
3	3%		
2	2%		
1	1%		
<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100%</b>

91		26	29%
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## **PGFL Grant Recipients – 2024**

**Alexandra Park Neighbourhood Learning Centre of Toronto | Toronto, ON**

[www.apnlc.org](http://www.apnlc.org)

The West TO Literacy Collaborative tutor training project will enhance our capacity to deliver One-to-One Tutoring Programs by adapting our tutor training series to a hybrid delivery model, developing new volunteer recruitment strategies, and adding tutor and practitioner professional development workshops that complement our initial training series.

**Centre for Family Literacy Society of Alberta | Edmonton, AB**

[familit.ca](http://familit.ca)

By expanding the Literacy Links family literacy program to include families with school-aged children, we aim to bridge gaps in learning caused by COVID-19 and other factors. Our program will empower adults to support their child's learning, through strategies and tools that integrate literacy into daily life for the family.

**Cosmos Community Support Services Ltd. | Red Deer, AB**

[cosmosreddeer.ca](http://cosmosreddeer.ca)

Cosmos' adult literacy initiative enhances inclusivity with improved instructional effectiveness, supportive environments, lifelong learning programs, personal growth opportunities, and increased community engagement, fostering a literate, inclusive society.

**Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association | Edmonton, AB**

[ecala.org](http://ecala.org)

The Community of Inquiry: Justice-based Approach for Adult Literacy in Edmonton Project is a collaborative effort between five non-profit agencies, granting council, and academics to determine what we know, what we think we know and what we need to know to address the inequity and crisis in adult literacy programs.

## **Literacy Association of Nova Scotia | Truro, NS**

[literacyns.ca](http://literacyns.ca)

A new module will be developed for inclusion in the Nova Scotia Practitioner Training and Certification Program to enhance the current offerings included in the training program and meet the specific needs of CLO practitioners serving Mi'kmaq learners.

## **Literacy Network of Durham Region | Pickering, ON**

[lindr.on.ca](http://lindr.on.ca)

Bibliotherapy Durham is a non-clinical, developmental adult literacy intervention that promotes connectedness and wellbeing through guided reading groups. In addition to providing contextualized learning through literature and poetry, it promotes self-expression, self-reflection and decreases the social isolation that inhibits learning. This model is inclusive, responsive and fosters belonging in learning.

## **Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy | Toronto, ON**

[mtml.ca](http://mtml.ca)

The Literacy Legacy Project: Educating the next generation of practitioners through a Training Tool for new and current literacy workers via a series of podcasts with retired and soon to retire literacy specialists. The podcasts will capture insights, gaps, and best practices around the 5 services that literacy programs deliver.

## **NorQuest College | Edmonton, AB**

[norquest.ca](http://norquest.ca)

The microcredential, Everyday Reading & Writing for Life & Work, will consist of a series of self-paced, offline learning modules for adults in community and correctional education programs, aimed at improving foundational literacy skills, reading, and writing. Upon completion, competencies will be recognized with a sharable badge, increasing learner employability.

## **People, Words & Change | Ottawa, ON**

[pwc-ottawa.ca](http://pwc-ottawa.ca)

This project enables PWC to update its website and create a new rack card and video that will ensure we have effective outreach tools in place to raise awareness of our literacy and basic skills tutoring program and increase the number of individuals we help.

## **Portage College | Lac la Biche, AB**

[portagecollege.ca](http://portagecollege.ca)

This foundational literacy project employs diverse teaching methods and resources to enhance reading skills for adult non-readers with cognitive disabilities. Through one-on-one instruction, adults receive tailored support while community service workers gain skills to provide ongoing assistance. Collaborating with local agencies ensures sustainable and impactful training opportunities for all stakeholders.

## **The CanLearn Society for Persons with Learning Difficulties | Calgary, AB**

[canlearnsociety.ca](http://canlearnsociety.ca)

The Basic Math Program helps adult learners develop numeracy as a life skill and a stepping stone to further learning. Learners are enrolled in group or one-on-one learning sessions based on assessing their numeracy skills and learning needs.

## **The John Howard Society of Manitoba | Winnipeg, MB**

[johnhoward.mb.ca](http://johnhoward.mb.ca)

People coming out of prison regularly suffer from an inability to read and write at average levels. This is a barrier to successful re-entry into society. Guided by an Indigenous advisor, we will produce 25 free workbooks that support incarcerated individuals as they develop skills to improve their lives.

**The Labour Education Centre | Toronto, ON**

[laboureducation.org](http://laboureducation.org)

This project empowers adult literacy practitioners to create customized, learner-centred digital literacy curriculum, tools and resources, ensuring relevance amidst an evolving technology landscape, respecting learner's pace, demystify the language of 'being online', and equipping learners with relevant reading and writing strategies to safely navigate the internet across digital devices.

**Tillsonburg & District Multi-Service Centre | Tillsonburg, ON**

[multiservicecentre.com](http://multiservicecentre.com)

The grant will facilitate the "Adult Literacy for Newcomers to Canada" program in extending its services to immigrants who are in dire need of assistance to enhance their English reading and writing proficiency, essential for their success in everyday life.

**United for Literacy | Corner Brook, NL**

[unitedforliteracy.ca](http://unitedforliteracy.ca)

We provide free community literacy programs to underserved Indigenous learners in Corner Brook, improving skills and confidence, and helping learners realize their full potential. Our programming integrates traditional forms of literacy into a culturally relevant context, incorporating Indigenous media, languages, and other cultural knowledge into weekly opportunities for hands-on learning.

**Wrinch Memorial Foundation Society on behalf of the Learner Opportunity Group Society of Hazelton | Hazelton, BC**

[logslearners.org](http://logslearners.org)

The Learner Opportunity Group's Literacy on Wheels delivers free books to all communities in the Upper Skeena Region using a Book Bus. Many communities in this culturally and geographically diverse region do not have ready access to the Public Library. This beloved project has been operating for more than two decades.