

## Executive Summary

Adult literacy programs at Bow Valley College (BVC) continue to support and build confidence in adult learners thanks to donors like you! Our *Centre for Excellence in Foundational Learning* delivers these vital programs that are unique to BVC, and Calgary as a whole, to reach out and accommodate underserved learners - fully implementing this funding. Their success is due to your investment in the **Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) Read and Write, Math for Everyday and Computer for Beginners programs** and we thank you for your support!

Both need and demand for these programs are high. Most importantly, we see the very real literacy outcomes for our learners, which in many cases are life-changing for them, made possible with your generous assistance. We welcome your continued support moving forward so we can continue to improve adult literacy in Calgary – together!

Many of you had long standing relationships with our ABLE instructors, Carol McCullough and Belle Auld. These two passionate and visionary practitioners built and stewarded these courses and other literacy initiatives for many years. Both Carol and Belle left Bow Valley College this past year. It has been remarkable stepping into their shoes and learning what a complex job they did with such professionalism, grace and compassion. Their work set the bar very high.

## Rotary Club of Calgary - Thank you for your generosity!

Your generosity continues to make a significant difference in the lives of adult learners at Bow Valley College. Your support helped us deliver fundamental literacy programs to 74 adult learners this past year who benefited from 8 course offerings over 3 semesters, putting them on a path to learning and improving their lives. For your records, we have prepared this Investment Report to update you on the impact of your commitment to the College and specifically, the ABLE programs.

With your help, the College supports a diverse and vibrant student body, creating educational opportunities for learners from all walks of life. As you peruse this report, think of all the learners whose lives you are improving with your giving.

## Because of you, our community rises

On behalf of 14,000 learners and across our regional stewardship area, we thank you for your generosity. Your support helps provide the most important thing for the advancement of our community, our economy and our society – education. And by supporting Bow Valley College, you have far more impact than you can imagine.

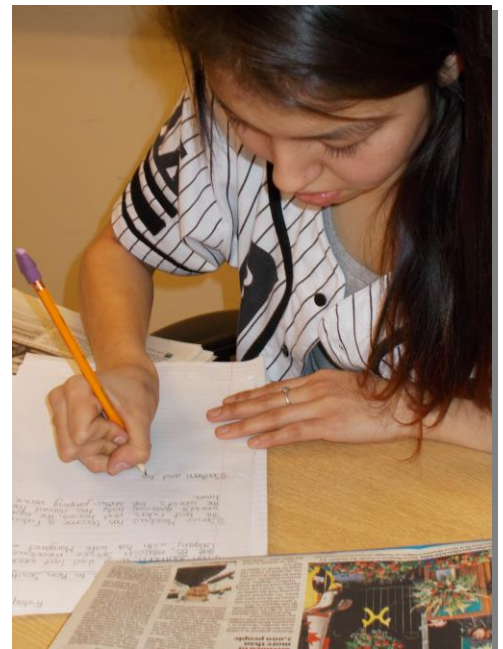
**You** are helping us write hundreds of success stories – one learner at a time. **You** help learners succeed by giving them an excellent foundation to an education, ensuring they can overcome barriers. **You** help our region flourish by giving people the opportunity to begin their journey to a stronger future, for themselves and their families.

## Our commitment to you

We are committed to building and maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship with you. Bow Valley College follows the highest standards and best practices, including the Donor Bill of Rights from the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

## How you are changing communities forever

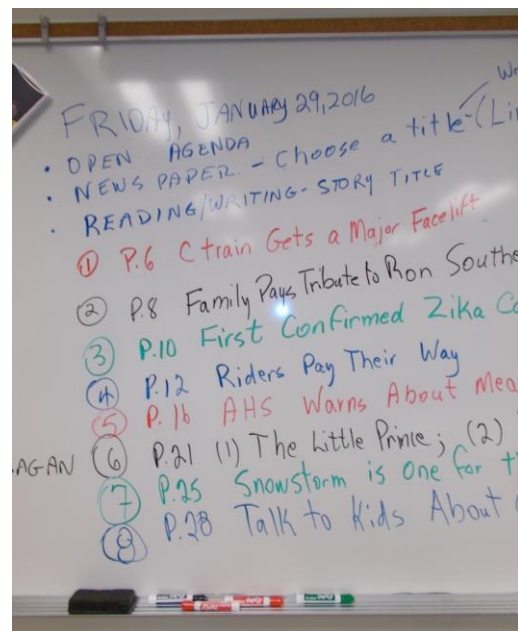
By contributing to BVC, you support adult learners to gain foundational literacy and essential skills and develop the confidence for learning and the motivation to change their lives. The positive impact of your giving is greatly appreciated as it goes well beyond the learner, impacting their families, the community and the economy.



You help us achieve our vision to be an innovative world-class college, rooted in communities, enabling people to Learn a Better Living™ and live a better life. Since 1965, Bow Valley College education has created pathways to success in the personal and work lives of more than 350,000 learners. We appreciate that you see the College, and our learners, as a good investment. We know that support from donors like you is critical to learner success.

## ABLE Programming Summary

The ABLE courses (Read & Write, Math for Everyday and Computers for Beginners) are offered as a suite under the umbrella of adult literacy programming at BVC. They present the opportunity for adults with low literacy skills in any of the three core areas to return-to-learning to build, rebuild or strengthen their foundational skills and learning strategies. It is the learning strategies that make the literacy skills transferrable from home to community to workplace. These courses continue to be offered as no fee and non-credit part-time, in an inclusive environment for



adults whose literacy skills are assessed at grade 2- 4 levels.

It is an opportunity for adults with disabilities to work and learn alongside with their non-disabled peers. Many adults with low literacy have undiagnosed learning disabilities.

The program's semesters now coincide with the mainstream BVC trimesters in order to make it easier for learners moving from ABLE to other BVC programs. A strong curriculum for each of the three subject areas has been developed, allowing learners to stay in each course for 2 years. This provides an opportunity for learners who are returning-to-learning to develop the kinds of habits of mind that will support them to be successful in this and other learning settings.

## Wrap-Around Learner Support for All!



All BVC learners have access to ALL BVC services. This includes counselling and support and access to college health services. It can mean an opportunity to have a learning assessment and the possibility of having accommodations and supports that can make this learning journey significantly different from past ones. ABLE learners receive a photo ID card. For some learners this is the first photo ID they have had, for others this ID card helped them get other ID through other community support services. This ID card also gives them access to the library on campus and if they choose, to the college tutoring services.

BVC supplies all learning materials and provides free computer access with individual accounts. We provide learners with information about human services such as job search programs, good food boxes, training opportunities and more. We link learners to other community supports and resources, responding when a learner becomes homeless, needs a Christmas hamper or referrals to emergency funding.

Many of the learners in the ABLE program are on a fixed income. At intake we identify with the learners what resource gaps there are in their lives and try to provide information and referrals as appropriate. **One of the widely used forms of support – made possible by your donation – provides transit tickets to those who would not be able to afford the transit to attend class on a regular basis. Thanks for helping them come to class!**

Students receive assistance in applying for the next level of literacy credit classes, as well as the counseling that goes with this step. Many will not qualify for career programs in the college, but they benefit from the information they receive about taking next steps. Some find that the shift to a full fee course 5 days /week is simply not feasible financially and with the many other commitments they have in their lives. Pre-employment skills in the ABLE programs include, but are not limited to, accessing on-line job postings, contact information for training programs and employment services and practice in completing forms in hard copy and online.

Upon program intake, all learners complete a learning goals form and have discussions about what they hope to achieve upon program completion. At mid-point and end of term the instructor and/or tutors review these goals with the learners. This is an opportunity for asset based self-evaluation. In each course we engage the learners in a pre and post-assessment, which is reviewed with learners along with their goals. These documents are put into the learner's portfolio as a reminder to them of how even small steps make every journey shorter.



All ABLE courses follow adult learning principles and use authentic adult learning materials.

**Your generosity helps us stock our classrooms with quality learning materials developed for these adult learners.**

## Common challenges ABLE learners face:

- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Anxiety disorders
- Cognitive challenges
- Mental health issues
- Speech problems
- Legal problems
- Aspergers/Autism
- Learning disability/Attention deficit disorder
- Physical disability
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Light sensitivity
- Down Syndrome

This list is very illustrative because in a class of a dozen all of these factors may be present. This is a perfect example of a multi-level complex adult literacy classroom environment. Classes are kept relatively small because of this and we work very hard to augment the class with volunteer support.



## When asked how they will use their skills outside of the classroom

### ABLE Read & Write learners reported:

- Use writing to socialize and communicate with friends via text
- Enjoy going to the library and reading with friends
- Fill out forms at work during safety meetings and during safety tests
- Reads everywhere when travelling, on the internet, and doing independent reading
- Writing a story at home about myself and am able to write to loved ones
- Feel more confident helping son with homework, understand his assignments and help him write stories
- Read at home, able to follow a recipe when cooking
- Feel more confident speaking in public and in class





## ABLE Math for Everyday learners reported:

- Learning basic counting has helped me with shopping and purchasing items.
- Use mental math when going to the store.
- Use math for counting money.
- Use math for playing games and keeping scores.
- Want to go into Upgrading math in future.
- Use math skills when grocery shopping and telling the time.
- Want to use my math skills in a future job.
- Will use math in my work at Home Depot.
- Want to start a business and will need math skills.

## ABLE Computers for Beginners learners reported:

- Use typing skills for exams and assignments at school
- Search the internet independently at school or at the library
- Can place her improved typing speed on her resume for applying for data entry positions
- Will be able to access YouTube and the internet from my laptop
- Can look up recipes on the internet
- Can work independently at school, at the library or at home on my laptop
- Typing with two hands makes typing easier

\*Full results from student satisfaction surveys available on request.

## Volunteer Hours

Volunteer classroom tutors across all three courses and over the three semesters donated an approximate total of 640 hours of time in 2015. This is the equivalent of \$8,960 (at \$14.00 per hour). BVC appreciates their time and talent working closely with these learners, helping enhance their learning experience and change their lives.

It is with **your support** that we are able to inspire learners to continue on their educational journey. Thank you for supporting our learners in their pursuit of learning. Your gift signals to learners that their hard work is recognized and their goals are attainable!

**You continue to help us broaden the impact of improving adult literacy to underserved adults in Calgary.**

## Thank You!

