

Lift Me Up

∞ Stories by Toronto Adult Literacy Learners ∞

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Presented by The Word on the Street
and Toronto Adult Literacy Programs

Lift Me Up
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Lift Me Up follows *Land That I Dream Of* (2002) and *From Self to Story* (2004) as the third collection of stories by Toronto adult literacy learners published as part of a national project, managed by The Word On The Street Canada and funded by the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills.

Our partner in developing the workshops and coordinating the writing contest that culminated in these collections is the Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy (MTML), a network of organizations and individuals who are involved in and support adult literacy. We are so grateful to Colleen D'Souza and Glenn Pound for their assistance at each step of this project.

We would like to recognize the many unnamed tutors who helped the learners with their submissions, and, of course, the authors of these personal stories and the many more that were submitted. We thank them for sharing their stories with us, and now, with you.

A special thank you is extended to the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills, part of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, without which this project would not have been possible.

We would also like to recognize the following people who have given their time and talent to this project. Sheila Stewart for planning the writers' workshops and guiding many of the writers whose work appears here; Nancy Friday and Rebecca Cunningham for reading every submission and helping to select the stories that embodied the spirit of the project; Kate Edwards and Liz Stewart for their careful and concise editing of the content while honouring each author's unique voice; Victoria Moorshead for lending her talent to the design; and Colleen O'Neill of The Word on the Street National Office.

I hope you enjoy these stories as much as we do.

ALEXANDRA MOORSHEAD
Festival Director
The Word On The Street

EDITING NOTE:

The stories in this collection have been edited lightly for the sake of consistency and spelling. The stories are published as the writers expressed them, the voices and emotion of the stories have been maintained.

Adult Literacy in Toronto

In our knowledge economy, literacy is more than a simple matter of reading and writing. It also involves social, cultural, and functional codes that help us participate in our society and to be aware of our rights and privileges as employees, community members, and citizens. In addition to reading and understanding, it is also about having the 'systems knowledge' to navigate in our information-based society. This may help to explain why over 500,000 working age adults in Toronto are below the minimum level considered necessary for coping with the demands of modern life and work.

It is also important to understand that rather than a "have-or-have-not" skill, literacy is more accurately perceived as a continuum of abilities. Instead of being seen as a skill that is developed during the early school years, it is viewed as an advancing set of skills, knowledge, and strategies that individuals build on throughout their lives. Many adults who experience literacy difficulties fell outside of the traditional approaches used in the school system. In order for them to have success at their second chance learning, they need alternative, life-long learning approaches that take into account their individual circumstances and learning styles.

In reading these stories I think you will be struck by what an enriching process this can be. By getting involved in literacy programs, and getting back on the road to lifelong learning, these authors have not only come to better understand the world and our city, but themselves. This has amazing results that resonate outward through their families and communities in ways that benefit everyone.

The literacy field in Toronto, long known for its learner-centred, progressive practices, is a model for an integrated, community-driven practice. With a strong community-based focus, Toronto has a variety of literacy programs funded through the provincial Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities. Students can access one-to-one, small groups, and classrooms, at a variety of providers which include multi-service community centres, libraries, school boards, and colleges.

The Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy (MTML) is the regional network serving these programs. We link over 200 individual and organizational members and help literacy programs in Toronto and York Region to work together. This fine book is an excellent example of collaborative effort. With *The Word on the Street*, we have worked together with literacy programs, learners, and tutors to offer writing workshops, gather stories, and publish this meaningful book.

Finding Help and Volunteering

One of MTML's most valued services is the Literacy Access Network (LAN), Toronto's Adult Literacy hotline. The LAN service is dedicated to responding to the needs of callers in a manner that is respectful and maintains confidentiality. We are committed to ensuring that callers speak to a real person who will listen to their needs and assist each caller in making the next steps when looking for literacy and upgrading programs.

If you, or someone you know wants to get involved in adult literacy, whether as a student or a volunteer, please call the LAN line at 416-961-5557. We will talk with you and help you to

decide which program is the best for your needs. Volunteers can donate their time as one-to-one tutors at community-based literacy programs in their area, simply call us and we'll put you in touch with a program in your area. The LAN information is also available on our website at www.mtml.ca/lan.htm.

MTML is very proud to be a part of this wonderful project. Thank-you and Congratulations to everyone who attended the workshops and submitted their stories for The Word on the Street/MTML Writing Contest.

GLENN POUND
Executive Director / Communications
Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy

Family

A Gift Given to Me

FLORENCE BROWN

The proudest moment of my life, was giving birth to each of my children. My first child's name is James. He was born in January, the coldest month of the year. I remember how James used to sleep. When he slept he crossed his arms. It looked so cute. My second child's name is Debra; she came in April. Debra had no hair, but a smile that could light up the whole room. Joshua was my last born child. He was born in March. Joshua never did cry a lot, and he always looked like a deep thinker. All my babies are totally different from each other but every moment I spent with each of them was special. Becoming a mother was a blessing and I'm glad I had the opportunity to share this experience with my babies.

A mother always remembers having that special bond with her babies. It's something she will treasure forever. There is a lot of responsibility in taking care of children, such as discipline, clothing them, feeding them, keeping them safe, along with responding to their emotional needs. It's great to be a mother. When a woman gives birth to her child the intuition she already has becomes much more sensitive. In this way, the woman's strength becomes the strength of her children.

A new addition to the family offers those who love an opportunity to love more. Although children don't always adapt to a new arrival easily the love they have for each other will shine through in times of trouble. A family that shares love will teach love and grow through love. A mother who stays up all night with the baby, and takes care of her other children in the daytime shows great dedication to her own. A mother's love is remarkable.

Animals, like humans, protect their offspring from harm just as a mother goose is proud to walk with her gosling following her. While animals are a different species than us, it is obvious that the mother goose and the woman share the same intuition when having young ones. This expresses the great blessing of creation, the same blessing I have experienced and shared with my own babies.

- Winner

Red Shoes

VENITHA

When my mother she has born me into this world I was glad that I came but as a child I have lots of problems. When I was at the age of 13 she send me to live with some people and I did not feel that I was welcome by she. I was not happy to see all the others at home and I am not there. I know that I miss out all the love from my mother which a mother should gave a child. At night when I go to my bed, no one to talk with. I look up to the roof and I think I am nobody's child, nobody wants me. I left and I go back home and I go to my mother and sit by her side and I look at she and I said to myself when I make my child that is how I am going to live with them? No, I am going to make them happy.

But in my childhood I never have know a proudest moment except when my mom give me red shoes at 9. It was a surprise. At the time I went to school in bare feet. Reds are my favourite colour. I love red. Red has a lot of meaning. As a little girl, red is the colour of a part of a rainbow. When the sun goes down part of the clouds are red and other parts are pink. Red is like a bunch of roses. It's bright. Red goes with everything.

The Queen was coming to our school for our concert and we did want to give she a surprise. The day of the concert I think I was not going because I feel I have nothing to wear. I had a red shirt and white skirt, but I didn't have no shoe as yet. Every children dressing up and I was just looking at them peeping behind the door, jealous. In the morning my mother call and say "What are you doing there?" And she say, "Okay, you go on the river and have a bath." I went. When I get back home she said, "Go inside. I have something in there for you." When I go inside there was a red slippers on the bed. I was so glad that I couldn't know how to even put on the shoes. I put the right to the left and the left to the right. My mom said, "How are you walking so?" After I walked down the street proud. Looking to see if anyone is watching me. My head up, proud. I walk like a chicken with its feathers cocked-up. But this is it. At the age of twenty I forget about the past and now I am thinking about the present. This is my presence. I get two daughters and I do what a mother should do for their kids. I gave love to them. I fold them in my arms as a bird does to its child. My arms are like wings and when anyone come by close to my children I fold the girls under my wings close to my breast so no one can take them from me. I love them so much! I am so happy that I have someone in my life to be there for me and I for them. I think them is my whole world. One day I take the two of them out to dinner. I buy two pairs of red shoes for them. They put them on and go outside and called to their friends, "Come, mom has bought a red shoes for we." When the girls going down the road in their red shoes and red t-shirt, white pants and their two little red purses by their side, their friends call and ask them if they are Cinderella!

- Winner

My Proudest Moment

LIZETTE BLUETT

Back in June 1978 was the Proudest Moment in my life.

It was when my little boy was born. He came 8 weeks early, I was rushed to the hospital on a Friday morning and 72 hours later a 7lb 20z blonde hair blue eye little boy came into the world. My mother kept calling the hospital to see if her grandchild was born I kept telling her not yet, I will call you as soon as it's over with.

My little boy was born at 5:50 p.m. The doctor could of used a catcher's mitt, because that's how fast Cory came into the world.

My mother asked me if Cory had all his fingers and toes, I told her yes, Cory had all his fingers and toes. He was an amazing and beautiful baby to me. A few years ago my sister phoned me and told me Cory had an accident working on his tow truck.

I asked her how bad it was and she told me that Cory lost his fingers.

So I told her I would talk to her later and hung up on her, I looked at the balcony and I saw my mother's face asking me the same old question, does Cory have all his fingers and I started to cry.

- Honourable Mention

A Mother's Sacrifice

CLAUTUSE NONYE

This is a story about my mother and me. I was born in the year 1972 in a village called Uga in Aguata, local government area of Anambra State, Nigeria. My mother was a very good woman. She cared for her children and the children of other women in our village and everybody talked only good about her.

Several months after I was born, my father died. It was then my mother showed her husband that she loved him. I was only six months old at the time. After the burial of my father, many people came to our house telling my mother that she should leave me and go and marry another man. My mother said no. She could not marry again, and she would stay with her son, which was me. From there, my mother showed me love until I grew up and I promise that I will always love her 'till the end of my life.

When I was about ten years old, my mother told me about her decision and I felt so proud that she had chosen me. If my mother had chosen to agree with what people had advised her to do, I would have been a dead person. So, come rain or come sun, I will always love my mother. That is the ending of my true story.

- Honourable Mention

My Kids Make Me Feel Proud

D.M.

My proudest moment was the day my kids were the Student of the Month both at the same time. This was last March, they were working hard at school as they always try to do, but this month something different happened. My son was invited to the boys' reading club and my daughter was named mentor for a girl that just came from Mexico and doesn't speak English. My son has been involved in different activities at school and he really likes to read but he never thought he could enjoy the boys' reading club. When he got the invitation he was really happy, he asked me if can I give my permission for it and I said yes, so, he started on the reading club. He was doing the reading club, floor hockey, homework, swimming once a week at evenings. He was tired but happy about all the things he was doing. On the other side my daughter was helping her new classmate. For my daughter it was a hard assignment because even though Spanish is her first language she started to forget it because she speaks English most of the time. At home she looked up for some books she has in Spanish and she asked me for words and how to spell it. At school she made a list with words that her new friend learned in English. All days after school she asked her friend for the words she learned during the day, to make sure she remembered. The end of the month was coming, and my daughter's teacher sent me an invitation to the ceremony of the Student of the Month, my daughter was so happy, and I felt really proud of her, and my son was happy too, because he saw his sister work hard to help her friend, but he was a little sad because he did not receive the invitation letter, so he thought "Well, this is not my month, maybe next"; but what happened was that his teacher forgot to send the invitation to me. The day of the ceremony came, that day I went to drop them off to school, I gave them a kiss and I told my daughter I'll see her at the ceremony at 10:00a.m., my son went to his classroom upstairs, I was leaving, when I heard my son calling me, he came to me happy and excited, he told me "Mom, I'm Student of the Month too, my teacher forgot to send to you the invitation letter." So that day I went to the ceremony and I saw my kids receiving the award for Student of the Month, it was my happiest and proudest day of my life. I took a picture of them to remember the day.

- Honourable Mention

My Best Trip Home

"SPEEDY"

My name is Speedy and I came to Canada from Jamaica. Every year I wanted to go back and visit my grandmother so much, but I didn't get the chance to because things were always very tight for me.

Finally, after being in Canada for 10 years, I was able to go back to Jamaica and visit my grandmother, who was 101 years old and who I loved so much. When I went back, I was very happy to see my grandmother. She was very happy and over-whelmed with joy to see me, her favourite grandson.

Six years later, I went back to see her again. At that point, she was sick. I looked at her and said: "Granny, what happened to your kitchen?" She said that it fell down after a hurricane.

My proudest achievement was building a kitchen for my grandmother. I did it before I left. Her last words to me were, "Thank you very much, my grandson, because out of all my grandkids, you were the only one that came all the way from foreign and did such a big thing for me. I am very proud of you and I will always love you." I came back up to Canada.

When I heard that my grandmother passed away, I was very mad and also very upset because I was just there a week before. I am very glad to know that I could go back to Jamaica and participate in being the one that buried my grandmother because she was more than a grandmother to me. When I was six months old, my mom left me to go to live in Canada. My dad was a "galman" so he didn't even take the time to bother to come and see me, his own son. I did not know my mom or dad for 15 years. For those first 15 years of my life, my grandmother was my mom and my best friend. She was the only mother that I knew when I was growing up as a child and she was the only one that was there for me when everyone left me.

- Honourable Mention

My Proudest Moment: Giving Birth to My Daughter

RACHEL ADOM-AMPOFO

My proudest moment was when I was giving birth to my daughter.

When I was a child I used to play with little children a lot. Sometimes I would pretend that I was a mother with a lot of children. I love children, so when I grew up it was my dream to be married and have many children, as many as I could.

The one day I left my country, Ghana, to stay with my father in South Africa. I met a young man from Ghana and we fell in love and we got married. After two months of marriage, he changed in attitude and behaviour. He started staying out late and I believed he was seeing other women. Friends confirmed my suspicions, but I still could not believe them. Later, things got worse. My husband would leave home and come back after two days.

Around this time I became pregnant. I was very happy because I knew I was going to have a baby. When I told my husband about the news he was angry with me. He started assaulting me everyday. Sometimes he would kick me in my stomach.

I became very sick and I had a miscarriage. When I got well, I wanted the marriage to work so I forgave him. He became sober for a short time, and then started to mistreat me again. He would beat me, and drag me from the bedroom to the living room. I became pregnant again, but he would not stop abusing me. He would lock me in the house. Sometimes he would not let me sleep in the bed. He would tell me to sleep on the floor.

After being pregnant for six months it was too much for me. So I went into labour and lost the baby. I cried and cried a lot. I became depressed. I thought I could never have a child again.

I left him. I was 26 years old. Anytime, I saw someone with a child I would remember my two unborn babies. But then I said to myself I shall never give up because I believe in God. I know God gives good things in his own time.

One day I left South Africa and I came to Canada, the land of promise. I did marry again, but I thought I could never have a baby. My husband kept telling me that I should be patient.

Then all of a sudden, I got pregnant. I cannot tell you how happy I was. But, I was still afraid that I would have a miscarriage again. My doctor told me that I should not worry. He examined me and he said, "Everything is fine."

I prayed everyday that almighty God should keep the baby safe for me. Finally I went into labour. It was exciting. After six hours in labour my doctor told me that I had a healthy baby girl. Doretta. It was a very nice feeling which I cannot describe. I was overwhelmed.

Holding my little Doretta in my arms and looking at her face, her little toes and fingers were so amazing. I could not think of anything else at that moment.

I love and cherish her a lot because she brought happiness into my life and helped me to overcome my insecurity that I could never have a child.

I give thanks to almighty God who gave her to me to fulfill my dream. That is my proudest moment because anytime I look at my Doretta I feel joy inside of me.

- Honourable Mention

Someone Called Dad

DWAINE McDONALD

My proudest moment started on January 13, 1984-the day my son Noah was born. It was a Friday when the little bundle of joy came into our lives. It was the start of a whole new chapter in my life. I was a Dad, a protector and I had to guide this little person on his way in life. It was a job I did not take lightly.

My wife would always read stories to him before bed. I would have liked to have read to him, but I struggled with reading so much that I couldn't read to him. I felt ashamed so I would always do other things with him like giving him his bath and taking him for walks.

Things in our lives went well until my son was two-and-a-half years old and my marriage fell apart. We separated and my wife got custody of Noah. I stayed in contact with my son for about another year. I then tried to make a new start in my life by moving to Toronto. In the process of moving I lost visitation rights for many years.

Through the years, I tried to see my son, but he didn't want to see me. When he was ten, my wife and I hired a mediator for him. He relayed to the mediator that he did not want to see me. So I said to the mediator that when he was ready, he could seek me out. I would not see my son again until my mom died in 2002.

At my mom's funeral we talked for the first time in many years. He said I could start e-mailing him on the computer. My son was eighteen years old at the time. I once tried to e-mail him; the response I received was only one line long. Not knowing how to proceed, I waited and about one year later I got invited to his high school graduation.

I found out he was an honours student and had been accepted into a concurrent education program. Each year, only four percent of all applicants are accepted. Not knowing that he wanted to be a teacher, I was delighted at how smart he was. After his graduation we went for a coffee and talked about where we should proceed in our relationship. We also talked about my past demons.

In the last four years, we have been talking regularly on the phone and we see each other a few times each year. We have gotten to know each other well and through that process he has become aware of my reading and writing challenges. Because of that, he talks about possibly working with children with learning disabilities. So how proud do you think I was to be invited to his university graduation? It will be one of the proudest moments of my life. But the proudest moment of my life was getting the call to come to his graduation and finally knowing that I am a part of his life and someone he calls Dad.

- Honourable Mention

I Am a Unique and Phenomenal Woman

N. M. DIXON

I am free from bondage, all the pain and suffering and torment I have endured all my life. I was very proud to give life to my children. When I had my son, it seemed like the world stood still, the smell of life coming in this world. I can't believe the heart that beats in me will beat in them. I am not alone anymore. I have a part of me for life. Even though all my children are born by rapists, I still came out a winner. Why? My God blessed me with three wonderful children. They will always be a part of me for life. I have proved to myself and to the world that they can throw anything to me and I fight the good fight to prove them wrong. We are as one, nursing them and caring for them make me and my sons strong. I am unique and I am a phenomenal woman and I am going to give praise to my God for the blessing he has given me. Praise his holy name for he is my guiding light at the end of the tunnel.

- Honourable Mention

My Proudest Moment

MEGAN P.

At age sixteen, I made the most important decision of my life. I gave birth to a baby girl and made the decision to give her up for adoption. It was a very distressing time in my life but it was the best decision I ever made. I was so young; I wanted to give her the chance to have a good life. I didn't think I could give her the life I would want for her.

I chose private adoption because I had the option to choose the family that I wanted my baby girl to be with. In private adoption most times an agreement is made between the birth mother and the adopting family to have frequent visits and to receive updated photos arranged by both parties.

With the adoption agent, and a lawyer we looked at various portfolios. A portfolio is a package which includes the family background and photos put together by the family interested in adopting a baby. I chose two separate families to interview. After I met the first couple we all discussed my baby's background; they decided she was not the child they wanted. I felt hurt. I then met the second couple that I chose who had already adopted two other children. They were very interested in my daughter. I was happy. They asked several questions about my baby's background and seemed to be very excited. After a second meeting with the family they decided that they would love to adopt my baby girl-Talia.

I was overjoyed. I felt they are loving and caring people and in my heart I knew they would give my daughter a good life. The greatest feeling is when we are in contact by phone and have our visits.

Talia is now a beautiful, bright, happy five-year-old. Sometimes my family and I go to their home for visits; have a barbeque, laugh, play games and sit and talk. We really enjoy our times together. Talia is home-schooled with her brother and sister as both parents are teachers. Talia loves to rollerblade, swim and go to the park. She really loves to sing.

I am proud of her and the decision that I made five years ago. I'm also lucky to have contact with the family. Not all adoptions are as awesome as this one. For this I will always be proud of the judgment that I made.

- Honourable Mention

Finding Home

My Proudest Moment

D.Y.

My daughter and I became Canadian citizens on 25th October in 2006. We were so happy on that moment.

Finally we belong to somewhere in the world. I was born in a refugee camp in India, because my parents were Tibetan refugees.

The Indian government has been helping us since 1959, but for some reason we can't become citizens in India, so we were always counted as refugees until, we became Canadian citizens.

Actually I would like to be proud and thank those people who built this country and made the rules like equality for citizens.

Canada is the most beautiful country. The more I learn about Canada the more I become proud of myself as a Canadian.

- Honourable Mention

Canada, My Promised Land

H.H.

The most difficult time in my life was going to Kenya from my homeland, Ethiopia. I had to travel for two days by bus to the Kenyan border. Passing from the Ethiopian border to Kenya was very risky and difficult. I had to travel by foot about two kilometres without getting caught by the Kenyan police and the Kenyan police were watching everywhere. At one point I thought that I was caught but I wasn't because God protected me from all the troubles of getting caught and going to jail and being deported to Ethiopia which was a very dangerous place. After I passed over the border I went to a lady's house because she was helping me process my refugee claim.

After waiting two-and-a-half years in a refugee camp in Kenya, finally I got accepted by the United Nations and by the Canadian government. It was an unbelievably wonderful experience. I came to Canada sixteen years ago. I call it the land of freedom and the land of opportunity. The first day I landed on Canadian soil, I was very excited, I will never forget it for the rest of my life. I am grateful to God who helped me through rough and dangerous times. In Kenya also, I was proud of myself because I stayed in that hard situation and I finished my time of staying in a refugee camp.

The plane landed at Pearson International Airport in the city of Toronto. My sponsors who are my cousin and his wife, came to the airport and took me to their home. The next day they asked me if I wanted to go out with them and see Toronto and I answered, "Okay, I will take my ID card and I will go out with you." My cousin smiled at me and he said to me "Hirut, you don't need any ID to see Toronto," and I hesitated but I decided to go out with them without my ID card. Then we went out to see this fabulous city of Toronto. I saw the CN Tower and I was amazed by its height. The CN Tower at that time, was the tallest building in the world and we drove and walked through the city. Yes, it is true, Canada was the land of freedom that day. No one asked me for any ID card that day or any day since then.

Canada is the land of opportunity if you know how to educate yourself. A good education helps you to get a good job; it also helps to build your self-esteem. To be successful in life you have to have the skill of saving money, too. Unfortunately, I didn't do much of all that money-saving thing. I had to work for many years in order to support myself, as well as my mother, sister and brother. I love them and I don't regret it. I did what I had to do at that time.

I graduated from George Brown College in the latest computerized accounting system. I learned computer skills and I am determined to pursue my dream in the future because I am still living in the land of opportunity. It is never too late to learn and to be successful. Right now I am getting an academic education to obtain a Canadian high school diploma. Also, I am learning sewing as an art form at the Adelaide Resource Centre for Women. I have worked in different restaurants and hotels and I have gained lots of experience. Also, I had a chance to work in an office and I gained seven years of office work experience. One day I might be able to find a good job and I could support my daughter and myself; after all, I am a single mother. With God's help anything is possible.

- Honourable Mention

My Proudest Moment

JOAN ALEXANDER

My proudest moment was getting my Landed Immigrant Status papers. I worked hard in getting my papers. It took ten years and a lot of trying. I went to interviews and got turned down a lot but I never gave up. I got arrested and was put in detention for two months because Immigration told me to leave when they refused my application and I did not leave. I have spent ten years trying to get my status. I learned so much from the different people I met in detention. Some I felt sorry for because they had small children. It was what I thought jail would be like. In spite of all the hardships the judge gave me permission to re-apply. Which I did, and now I am a proud Canadian.

- Honourable Mention

Personal Victories

The Ride to Remember

A.C.

It was the summer of 1998. The weather was definitely hot. I suddenly got an idea that became a dream and that would make that summer completely different from any other. This idea would involve my uncle and three of my friends. We would pedal our bikes all the way to Niagara Falls!

We knew that we needed to be physically fit to finish this trip, so we started training. Our daily routine after school was to ride our bikes for hours until we became tired, drained, and completely exhausted. We rode for about 20-25 km a day to build up stamina. Our training went on for about three months before our big journey. It would be a tough haul, but worth it.

At 5:30 a.m., the whole gang met at my place to be ready to leave at 6:00 a.m. Our bags were packed as lightly as possible for the long trip ahead. The lighter our backpacks were, the easier the ride would be. We threw on our helmets and rode off to begin our adventure. We were so excited to be doing this journey, but at the same time, we were a bit nervous about getting there in one piece. Our first break would be in Burlington.

There we reloaded with the following items: drinks, power bars, and a five minute rest. Disaster struck on the way to St. Catharines! The pace started to slow down, and we began to feel weak and weary. Because our bodies had been in the same position, riding now became uncomfortable. Our butts and hands started to fall asleep. One of the boys felt that the journey was not going to succeed. There was too much pain and agony.

He wanted to quit. We couldn't let him. The rest of the team convinced him that we'd worked so hard to get where we were, and that we were going to complete the dream as a team.

We continued the journey and passed the time by singing and laughing. This distracted us from the pain of pedaling up and down hills. The trip took us through many farms and apple trees. Temptation got to us, so we stopped and picked a few. This became our third break. We were quite drained, but we had to get back on the bikes and get on the road again. (The rest was soon forgotten.)

On the way to Niagara-on-the-Lake, we experienced more difficulties that held us up. My uncle got a flat tire and my buddy broke his seat. We stopped at the side of the road. I took 15 minutes to replace the tire and to do a quick job with tape on the seat. As our destination was getting closer, we started to feel dehydrated, sweat soaked us, and the sun felt even hotter. We all needed to stop. My legs began to cramp and I felt scared. I couldn't go on. I knew my team needed me back on my bike and I did not want to hold them up. We all had to get rehydrated and stretch. After a while, I started to feel a bit better, but I knew that it would be a struggle to keep up. This pain stayed for another 45 minutes. As we rode through Niagara-on-the-Lake, we noticed a little water park, where we decided to stop and take a dip. My uncle took out his camera that he'd packed and started to take some pictures of the group and scenery. It was unfortunate that we could not stay for longer. The cool water refreshed us and gave us new energy. We had a goal to achieve, so we rode on.

Ahead of us was our biggest challenge: the Niagara Escarpment. This mountain area would definitely put a strain on us. It was really steep and long. It felt as though it would never end. At this point, we had been riding for 7 hours, which felt more like 24. We were exhausted and worn out. Niagara Falls was still three hours away; but, knowing we were close made us more eager to continue riding.

Finally, after pedalling for 10 hours, we arrived at the falls. All of our pain was forgotten. We were excited, thrilled and proud of our achievement. As for seeing the falls for the first time, we were quite amazed. That was a night to remember. More pictures were taken, and instead of pain, we all wore smiles on our faces.

When I look back at the pictures, I still feel the rush that was experienced that weekend. As for friendships, they have become closer and stronger than ever. After eight years, we still talk and laugh about our road trip. It is still hard to believe that we survived that ride to Niagara Falls. The experience has showed me that anything can happen if you put your mind to it. I hope that my story will encourage others to follow their dreams. As for a proudest moment in my life, this definitely has to be one of them.

- Winner

Freedom

DAWN LINTON

My proudest moment would have to be when I took a bus trip all by myself. I've always been scared to take long bus rides without my mom, mainly because I was scared of getting lost. On that day something came over me. It was the fear of not being able to obtain a kitten. As you may have guessed, I was going to the Toronto Humane Society.

I called the Toronto Humane Society to ask them where they were located. Then I called the bus company and I told them where the closest intersection is to my home. Following the instructions, I got on the Markham and Ellesmere bus, I made sure it was going to Kennedy station, got off the bus and walked up to the trains.

I had to go downtown so that meant I had a long ride ahead of me. As I took a seat I found myself "people watching." Watching them enter and leave the train the whole time. I found myself second-guessing myself, wondering if I took the right train and if I was going to be able to get a kitten. My destination was just four stops away from where I had gotten on the train. I was happy that I was going in the right direction.

I got off the train, walked up to the bus stop and took the streetcar. About six stops later, I got off at Sherbourne Street. I started making my way up the street, turned right at the corner and the Toronto Humane Society was right there in front of me!

I went into the adopting centre and found the little kitten I wanted. She was white and grey haired and as I was looking at her, I noted that she had the most beautiful green eyes I have ever seen. I filled out the form and put her in a pet box where she slept all the way home. I went back home the same way, only this time I felt more confident in myself. I had this little kitten depending on me to get her home safe and sound.

When I got home, my mom said "Dawn do you have any idea how far you've gone today?" She told me I was in the heart of the city. I didn't think I went that far in my wildest dreams. I said to her, "It must have been all those times we went down-town together that helped me learn the bus routes." At that moment I felt all of my fears of getting lost just disappear. My mom said, "See Dawn, you do know your way around Toronto, and you got a little kitten to prove it."

When I was asked by my teacher to write out my proudest moment, I immediately started writing. As I was writing this, I couldn't believe that I took that kind of challenge, but I did it and my little kitten Peanut reminds me of it everyday. This by far was my proudest moment.

- Winner

The Golden Mile

JAMES F. MILLER

I use to be a dreamer
Just a would-be singer,
Though I couldn't hold a tune
But that would change soon.

My best friend sang in a rock 'n' roll band,
But things didn't turn out as he planned.
As for me, I wanted to sing
Just like him more than anything.

My friend quit the band and said, "Join with me"
So we got together and played with glee.
Then a chance came with a band "Durins Bane,"
We joined up together but fame never came.

Then I formed my own band and hit the road
With a P.A. system that was cheap and old.
The P.A. system failed on our very first try
And not only that but my voice went awry.

Needless to say we were fired that night
And we lost other gigs that had cancelled from fright.
So we regrouped and got back at it again,
Back on the road, back in the game.

Our bass guitarist owned the P.A.
That was the only reason we let him stay.
Then we hooked up with a professional soundman
With fantastic equipment and we got a new bass
man.

We toured around on a blue and white school bus
That a farmer had no use for so he gave it to us.
One time it broke down in the middle of the night
With a fire in the back and no one in sight.

We flew on a jet to one of our gigs
To a wee town that was home to an oil rig.
A fishing trip was the highlight of our stay,
A Twin Otter flew us to a place far away.

It was an Indian village on Great Bear Lake
And the owner of the hotel had a lot at stake.

It cost him a bundle but the fish didn't care,
So he snagged some of them from a net that was
there.

We once went on stage in just underwear
To see if the people would notice or care.
The girls noticed first and screamed with delight,
The men took a while to notice the hype.

I never had much confidence as a singer
Because I don't have the range of a tenor.
But I didn't let that get in my way,
Until our drummer called it quits one day.

I felt down the road if we ever gained fame
That they would get rid of me when the chance came.
So I quit as well and that was the undoing
Of the band and the dream that I was pursuing.

After that I sang with a couple more bands,
One was short-lived and the other was bland.
Then I decided to take singing lessons
And my teacher got me ready in our vocal sessions.

The goal was to get into music school
At a local college I thought was cool.
I had to take theory and lit 'n' style
In order to walk that golden mile.

There were many great singers both women and
men,
Drummers, guitarists, pianists and then,
We each had to put together a band
And the teachers there gave a helping hand.

A vocal jury was the name of our test
That would separate the good from the best.
Then I found out when my turn came around
My drummer was missing, nowhere to be found.

As it turned out I had kept my cool,
He said he didn't want me to look like a fool.
So what did I do, I said, "You will be fine"
I said "just relax and we'll have a good time".

I sang from my soul every word, note and beat

And the crowd that was there stood up on their
feet.

Now that I look back I can honestly say,
That was my proudest moment' cause I got the
Only "A."

- Honourable Mention

Come Along with Me on the Journey, the Journey of Life

P. STANLEY

I find myself in a tailspin
Being pulled like a revolving door
Like a gust of wind whirling you around
Pulling me neither here, nor there
Where is my momentum?
How can I stop this?
How can I slow everything down?

Can I do it alone?
I wish I could!
But I need help from my friends
You and I.
I look away
I don't see
Nobody sees
But really they see but they also look away.

In tossing the balls
Making sure, not one falls
We're all having this juggling act
Why do we hide ourselves to the world?
Why do we hide ourselves from our self?
I don't need this juggling act
All I need is to be strong
Strong enough to have the strength
To know me and who I am
I can take all the camouflage away
And if I can, we all can.

We all can know our own truth
The truth of knowing and understanding
And standing and shouting
Everyone's voice singing as in a choir
We can let everything subside
From all the weathering of life's journey
And we all can help each other to hold on
To our own reality
The moment of truth.

My proudest moment is my moment of truth!
Where I can be proud of who I am
Through my journey of life
Have others being there!

Coming along with me on the journey
The journey of life.

Knowing we are here making a difference
In each other's lives
Bringing out the truth
So it confronts us
For you and me.

Let's sing out and rejoice
You are you
And I am, who I am.

- Honourable Mention

Turning My Life Around

DONNA WILLIS

When I was born in Nova Scotia. I was a little sister to my older sister Rose, and to my older brother. His name is Alison. They always took care of me. I was like their baby.

I never went out anywhere without them until I was 15 years old. I was only able to go out to church by myself.

I was a very happy little girl with lots of positive energy at all times. I looked forward to Sunday school, then church at 3:00 p.m. I knew that I could go there by myself and come home alone at 7:00 p.m.

Church made me a believer in God, and also made me able to love other people as I love myself. I care about people and learned to trust them.

Nova Scotia was a beautiful place to grow up in. It was an all black community named North Preston, about eight miles outside of Dartmouth. Dartmouth is where a lot of white people lived but it did not matter because on Sunday we were all together at church.

Our mother took the opportunity to teach us that everyone is the same no matter their colour. So I grew up where everyone knew each other. We all went to the same school and the same church and the same mall. We all played together. So we lived like brothers and sisters. The colour of our skin did not matter. I was very safe in Nova Scotia as a child and was always protected by my family.

In 1992 my mom said that we were moving to Toronto. It was October when we got to Toronto. My brother stayed with my dad in Nova Scotia. My sister, my mom and I came here to Toronto. We got an apartment on Bloor West. So here I was living in a very big city. I liked it because I got a job at Wooleo at Dufferin Mall. I was so happy.

I was working as a cashier. I met all kinds of people. I worked very hard for two years there.

One day, after work, I went to the mall and I met a guy. He was from Pakistan. His name was Asif. He was so handsome and he liked me. We were partners for five years and we had a son together. Asif had a lot of friends. One day his friends came to our place. They were in the next room drinking beer and smoking cigarettes, and there was another package on the table. I asked Asif, "What is that?" He said, "It is cocaine. Try it and it will make you feel good." I did.

That was the worst thing that ever happened to me. I became an addict and got involved with criminal activities. I have a criminal record and my mom took my son from me. I struggled with drugs for 5 years.

I could not see my son, which was upsetting, but my mom would never give up on me. So one day I told my sister that I wanted to change my life around and she said, "I will help you no

matter how bad you are because I love you and I am your big sister and I will do whatever I have to do to help you." And she did.

Here it comes, my proudest moment. I turned my life around. Today I have been clean and sober for three years. I have applied for a pardon for my criminal records. I am going to school at Literacy for East Toronto. I have been going since April 3rd, 2006. I am hoping to complete my Grade 12 and then go on to college. And, I have my son, Shaquille, back home living with me. That was April 1st, 2007. There are no words to describe how happy I am.

- Honourable Mention

The Jump

APRIL MANSFIELD

I am a spontaneous, fearless and fun person, to say the least. At the age of 16 I had the guts to jump out of an airplane. My proudest moment is when I had the courage to skydive. My parents and some of my friends thought that I was crazy, but my best friend, Jennifer, and I wanted to do it so badly. We had to save \$200 to start our mission. With our part-time jobs, it took us three long months to save the money.

We had to go to skydiving school. It was an all day class that started at 6:00 a.m. The first part of our course was in class. For four hours, they showed us how to get out on the wing of the plane. We had to get to a certain spot of the wing to jump. It was important for us to learn because they didn't want the wind to scoop us up before we were able to jump off. They showed us how to work the parachute. They showed us how to work the toggles. The toggles are what you use to guide the parachute. They also showed us what to do if the parachute didn't open.

After four hours in the classroom, we went outside and physically put into practice everything we learned. We practiced for another four hours. The course was a total of eight hours. It didn't feel like we were in school for the whole time because our teacher was very funny and he made the classes fun.

The day started out nice, but the weather started to get bad later on. Jennifer and I were ready to jump; but, because the weather was not good, they told us that we couldn't jump. Jen and I were upset. The weather then slowly started to turn around for us. After two hours of waiting, they said that we were able to jump. We were so excited. We called our parents to come watch us jump.

I had this amazing rush when I jumped. I was all alone in the sky. I felt like I was free as a bird. The song that popped into my head was by The Eagles, "Free as a Bird." The view was amazing. Everything from the houses to the people looked so small. I was in the air for about ten minutes. I could feel the air going through my ears.

After the rush of emotions I was a little scared, but I had to take control because it was my life in my hand. I had no one around to help me out. After a few moments of panic passed, I was able to get my act together. I'm happy to say that I landed safely in the field. I landed first and my friend landed second. We looked at each other and said "Wow." We had such a great time and we promised each other that, one day we would do it again. I will always remember that jump because it is definitely my proudest moment.

- Honourable Mention

My Proudest Moment

STEVE SMITH

My proudest moment occurred June 3, 2001 at a soccer game in Clarendon, Jamaica where my teammates and I competed in a championship game against the Kingston Lions. It was such an exciting game.

I was the captain. We completed the game with both teams tied at one-one. The game went into overtime where we went into a penalty shoot out. Both teams missed their first two penalty kicks. Then after a while, it was the last two penalty kicks. Kingston Lions' Roy Jackson took the last kick for their team. It was an amazing shot and almost went in, but the Clarendon Allstars' goal-keeper deflected it right off the left post. It was the last kick for the Clarendon Allstars' team. I stepped up and took a deep breath and positioned the ball. Then I slowly took a look to both sides of the post and then I stepped up and took my kick. I placed the ball into the right corner of the net and scored. It was an amazing shot and the crowd went wild!

An hour later they handed out the trophy at the 2001 Jamaica Championship ceremony. I stepped up proudly and collected the trophy. I lifted the trophy up in the air and yelled in victory. My teammates ran and lifted me up in the air and we all started celebrating. It was my Proudest Moment.

- Honourable Mention

Learning

Making a Decision that Changed My Life

DELROY GAUSE

I am sitting here about to write you a story about my life-a story that I could not write for you one year ago.

A year ago, I felt like a failure. I was taken advantage of because I could not read and write. I had to get help from others for everything I had to do. It was terrible asking someone else to read to write my mail. It was painful to ask someone else to write my cheques. I could not read the signs at my workplace or fill in forms for myself.

My most embarrassing moments were when I would show up for a job, but could not fill in the application. I would find my way around by memorizing signs on the street. I would count the buildings and the number of intersections to get to where I was going. I would remember buildings and landmarks to find my way.

On one occasion, someone took out a MasterCard in my name and paid the monthly bills out of my bank account. I was in debt for over \$7,000! I was in trouble due to no fault of my own. Today, my life is very quickly turning around. A few days ago, my spouse, Clare, said to me, "You have come a long way!" This is how I feel, as well. I am now a thousand miles from the place I used to be.

My journey started when I walked into the Downsview Public Library. There I met Tina, the coordinator of the program, who brought me into the Adult Literacy Program. She helped me to help myself. I can now read, write and sign my own cheques. Now, when I sign something, I know what it says. I choose my own movies on television. I looked up the story of Pangaea, the Old Continent, on the computer. Wow! The world used to be one continent!

I can now read Father's Day cards and Christmas cards that my daughter gives me. I can use the day timer she bought for me. I can now spell and write the names of my family members: my mother's name, my father's name and my own name.

After six years in Canada, I travelled back to Jamaica for my father's funeral. I was the one who made the arrangements for the ceremony. I put the program together. I documented the names of family members. I returned to the cemetery to get the proper name of my grandfather, Gerald Gause, from the tombstone. I gave my dad, Kenneth Gause, a proper send-off!

My proudest moment was when I learned to read and to write for myself. As for me now, all I can think about is where I want to be in two years.

- Winner

Doors Opening

J. HARRIS

At nineteen years old, when I dropped out of school, I was angry and depressed because I could not make sense of reading. Asking people to do things for me made me angry. Sometimes, the way people responded to me hurt my feelings. There were times when people said that I was stupid or that I was dumb. Most of the time, it felt like all of the doors were locked for me. It messed me up a lot when I could not fill out an application form or when I could not read something that my daughter had asked me to read. All of this made me aggressive about learning. I learned some basics at the YMCA program. When I went to work as a dishwasher at Swiss Chalet, I tried to learn spelling from the menu. I started to do things like crossword puzzles, but I still did not feel confident that I was learning. I could not do many things, but I knew what I wanted to do.

One day, when I was really angry with my situation, I went through the phone book and I called Downsview Library to ask about programs. Since that time, I have been in the one-to-one literacy tutoring program. I feel more relaxed about learning and I really love it. From the first assessment with Tina, I felt that I would get something that, for so many years, I had been searching for.

Today, I am proud about how confident I feel. I set up my own company. I have taken some accounting, computer and investment courses. When I get a letter, I am proud to be able to read it to the end and not to have to ask someone to read it for me.

I am not angry anymore.

- Honourable Mention

Why Reading is Important

L. BAPISTE

My proudest moment was the day Marcus my son came home with an award for reader of the month. When he started school he was so shy that he would not talk or play or do anything even though he knew how to do it. The day he came home with his award I was so proud to see he was doing better in school. Every night before he goes to bed I always read three books to him that he picked out himself.

Learning to read is very important. I always told him because when you can read nothing is impossible and you can do anything you want and be anything you want. I'm learning that too. That's why I am in an adult literacy program to learn the same thing and that's why I am encouraging him because it's very very important to learn to read.

- Honourable Mention

Learning to Read at 74

MARGRET BLAIR

My proudest moment is when I learned how to read. I was 74 years old at the time. I came from a family of fourteen children. There were four children older than me and nine children younger than me. When we were very young we had to go to work to help out the family. I was 12 years old when I left school to work at Monarch Knitting Mills.

I got married when I was seventeen. I had eight children. There were four boys and four girls. When the children were older I was going to see if I could go to school but my husband took sick and I looked after him for the next twenty years. I still wanted to learn how to read because one of my grandchildren found out that I could not read. Most of my grandchildren did not know that I could not read because I used to make up stories to tell them.

After my husband passed away, I went to the Greenwood Community Centre and asked if anyone could tell me where I could go to learn how to read and write. They told me about Literacy for East Toronto. I came to see Susan and she asked some questions and got me two tutors. Gaye helps me with my reading and Helen helps me with my writing.

Some of the books I have read are *Loretta Lynn: Coal Miner's Daughter*, *Hana's Suitcase*, four of the Anne of Green Gables books, and *The Crazy Man*. Because I read *Hana's Suitcase* I entered a contest to win tickets to see the play *Hana's Suitcase* that was playing at the St. Lawrence Centre. I won! Gaye and I went to see the play together. It was nice to see a play about a book I had read. We also rented the movie *Anne of Green Gables*. It was fun to see a movie about a book I had read.

I also belong to a group of learners at Literacy for East Toronto. Together we all read *The Maybe House* and went to meet the author, Lynne Kositsky. At that time I won my own copy of the book and also bought three of her other books. It was nice to meet the person who had written a book that I read.

I am so happy that I can read for myself now. My children and grandchildren are happy for me and will help me if I need it. All my children, grandchildren and great grandchildren are very proud of me for learning how to read at age 74. I'm proud of me too! I thank all those who have helped me along the way.

- Honourable Mention

My Proudest Moment

FELICIA

When I saw a particular book in the classroom I was excited. Now I can read about this book, *Things Fall Apart*. The reason why I like this book is because in South Africa, *Things Fall Apart* is a popular book. In South Africa, people both old and young talk about this book. I took the book home that first day and I was able to finish it. I am proud of myself because this is the first time I finished a book in one day and I wanted more of his books. I decided to know more about the author and the book. I found out that *Things Fall Apart* has 6 volumes and the author is from West Africa, Nigeria. His name is Mr. Chinua Achebe.

The trip to the library was very good. I found more information by use of the computer to know about Chinua Achebe. He is an author of many books like *Arrow of God*, *A Man of The People*, and *No Longer at Ease*, in addition to many other books. I learned how to use the computer to search for books by using the subject, and also how to use the 3 basic ways to search for a title.

- (1) Title
- (2) Author
- (3) Subject

Now I have my library card. I was able to borrow a book by C.L. Innes. It is a biography about Chinua Achebe. I have to return the book by the end of May to the library.

This book *Things Fall Apart* taught me a lot of things that I should not give up in anything if I put my mind on it. When I was reading this book my son asked me about the book I was able to read and tell him about this book that again is my proudest moment when people are talking about this book, now I can also talk about it too. Proud mom.

- Honourable Mention

LITERACY ACCESS NETWORK

To find out how to get help with reading and writing, contact the Literacy Access Network (LAN) at 416-961-5557. LAN can provide referral information on adult literacy programs in the City of Toronto and York Region. Information is also available online by visiting www.mtml.ca. LAN is a service of Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy.

Adult Literacy Programs in the City of Toronto

Alexandra Park Neighbourhood Learning Centre
707 Dundas Street West
Toronto, ON M5T 2W6
Telephone: 416-591-7384

AlphaPlus Centre
2040 Yonge Street, 3rd Floor
Toronto, ON M4S 1Z9
Telephone: 416-322-1012

Alpha Toronto / Grafitti Jeunesse
90 Richmond Street West, Suite 302
Toronto, ON M5C 1P1
Telephone: 416-542-1574

Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf
2395 Bayview Avenue
Toronto, ON M2L 1A2
Telephone: 416-449-9651 ext 109 (voice); ext 212 (TDD/TTY)

Canadian Hearing Society, IMPACT - ASL Program for Deaf Adults
271 Spadina Road
Toronto, ON M5R 2V3
Telephone: 416-928-2504 (voice); 416-964-0023 (TTY)

Centennial College, Academic Studies and Access Programs, Ontario Basic Skills Ashtonbee Campus
75 Ashtonbee Road
Toronto, ON M1L 2N3
Telephone: 416-289-5000 ext 7022

CNIB Deafblind Services
Literacy Program for Deafblind Adults
1929 Bayview Avenue
Toronto, ON M4G 3E8
Telephone: 416-413-9480 (voice); 416-480-8645 (voice or TTY)

Council Fire Native Literacy Program
439 Dundas Street
Toronto, ON M5A 2B1
Telephone: 416-360-4350

Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood Centre, Adult Literacy Program
1900 Davenport Road
Toronto, ON M6N 1B7
Telephone: 416-656-8025

Dixon Hall, Regent Park Learning Centre
417 Gerrard St. East, 2nd floor
Toronto, ON M5A 2H4
Telephone: 416-363-3920

East York Learning Experience
266 Donlands Avenue
Toronto, ON M4J 3R4
Telephone: 416-461-2666

Fred Victor Centre, Toronto District School Board
100 Lombard Street, Suite 102
Toronto, ON M5C 1M3
Telephone: TDSB South LBS Office 416-393-1995, or
Fred Victor Centre 416-364-8986

Frontier College - Beat the Street
35 Jackes Avenue
Toronto, ON M4T 1E2
Telephone: 416-923-3591 ext 360

Frontier College - Independent Studies
35 Jackes Avenue
Toronto, ON M4T 1E2
Telephone: 416-923-3591 ext 361

George Brown College, Literacy Basic Skills (LBS) and Ontario Basic Skills St. James Campus
200 King Street East
Toronto, ON M5A 3W8
Telephone: 416-415-5000 ext 2427

Humber College, North Campus, Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS)
205 Humber College Boulevard
Toronto, ON M9W 5L7
Telephone: 416-675-6622 ext 4842

Labour Education Centre, Adult Literacy Program
15 Gervais Drive, Suite 100
Toronto, ON M3C 1Y8
Telephone: 416-537-6532

Lakeshore Area Multi-Service Project (LAMP)
185 Fifth Street
Etobicoke, ON M8V 2S5
Telephone: 416-252-6471

Literacy for East Toronto
765 Queen Street East
Toronto, ON M4M 1H3
Telephone; 416-392-6810 ext 232

Native Women's Resource Centre, Adult Basic Literacy Program
191 Gerrard Street East
Toronto, ON M5A 2E5
Telephone: 416-963-9963

Parkdale Project Read
1209 King Street West, Unit 2
Toronto, ON M6K 1G2
Telephone: 416-531-6308

Preparatory Training Program of Toronto (East)
815 Danforth Avenue
Toronto, ON M4J 1L3
Telephone: 416-510-3266

Preparatory Training Program of Toronto (West)
5415 Dundas Street West, Unit 200
Toronto, ON M9B 1B5
Telephone: 416-239-7309

Seneca College, Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Eglinton Campus
1200 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 500
Toronto, ON M3C 1H9
Telephone: 416 491-5050 ext 4772 or 416 510-3002

Seneca College, Literacy Options (for students with disabilities)
10 Overlea Boulevard
Toronto, ON M4H 1A5
Telephone: 416-425-3463, ext 7270

St. Christopher House, Adult Literacy Program
248 Ossington Avenue
Toronto, ON M6J 3A2
Telephone: 416-539-9000

St. George's Adult Literacy Program, Toronto District School Board
100 Ranleigh Avenue
Toronto, ON M4N 1W9
Telephone: 416-484-3736

Street Haven at the Crossroads, Street Haven Learning Centre
67 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, ON M5C 1K6
Telephone: 416-392-9230

Toronto Catholic District School Board
80 Sheppard Avenue East
Toronto, Ontario M2N 6E8
Telephone: 416-222-8282 ext 2491 / 2556

Toronto Centre for Community Learning and Development
269 Gerrard Street East, 2nd Floor
Toronto, ON M5A 2G3
Telephone: 416-968-6989

Toronto District School Board (East), Literacy Basic Skills Pharmacy Adult Learning Centre
1641 Pharmacy Avenue
Toronto, ON M2K 2K5
Telephone: 416-396-6904

Toronto District School Board (South), Literacy Basic Skills The Bickford Centre
777 Bloor Street West, Room 214B
Toronto, ON M6G 1L6
Telephone: 416-393-1995

Toronto District School Board (West), Literacy Basic Skills Burnhamthorpe Collegiate, Adult Learning Centre
500 The East Mall
Etobicoke, ON M9B 2C4
Telephone: 416-394-3809

YMCA Learning Opportunities Program
42 Charles Street East
Toronto, ON M4Y 1T4
Telephone: 416-928-3362 ext 4141

The Toronto Public Library Adult Literacy Program offers services at the following branches:

Albion District Library
1515 Albion Road
Etobicoke, ON M9V 1B2
Telephone: 416-394-5173

Danforth / Coxwell Library
1675 Danforth Avenue
Toronto, ON M4C 5P2
Telephone: 416-393-7783

Don Mills Library
888 Lawrence Avenue East
Toronto, ON M3C 1P6
Telephone: 416-395-5710

Downsview Library
2793 Keele Street
Toronto, ON M3M 2G3
Telephone: 416-395-5720

Fairview Library
35 Fairview Mall Drive
Toronto, ON M2J 4S4
Telephone: 416-395-5750

Malvern Library
30 Sewells Road
Toronto, ON M1B 3G5
Telephone: 416-396-8969

Maria A. Shchuka Library
1745 Eglinton Avenue West
Toronto, ON M6E 2H4
Telephone: 416-394-1000

North York Central Library
5120 Yonge Street
Toronto, ON M2N 5N9
Telephone: 416-395-5535

York Woods Library
1785 Finch Avenue West
Toronto, ON M3N 1M6
Telephone: 416-395-5980

Adult Literacy Programs in York Region

Chippawas of Georgina Island First Nation Literacy Program
R.R. #2
Sutton West, ON L0E 1R0
Telephone: 705-437-4327

Learning Centre for Georgina
90 Wexford Drive, Unit 3
Keswick, ON L4P 3P7
Telephone: 905-476-9900

Literacy Council York South
7755 Bayview Avenue
York, ON L3T 4P1
Telephone: 905-771-7323

Literacy Council York-Simcoe
17817 Leslie Street, Unit 12
Newmarket, ON L3Y 8C6
Telephone: 905-853-6279

Seneca College
16655 Yonge Street, Unit 3
Newmarket, ON L3X 1W6
Telephone: 905-898-6199 ext 228

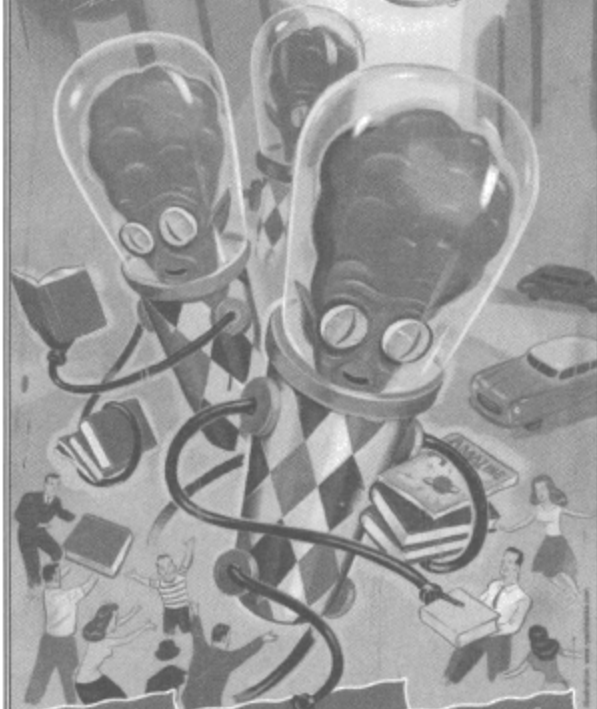
The Learning Centre Bradford Campus, Simcoe County District School Board
157 Holland Street East, Suite 205
P.O. Box 1436
Bradford, ON L3Z 2B7
Telephone: 905-775-4432

York Region District School Board, Literacy and Basic Skills Uplands Community Learning
Centre
8210 Yonge Street
Thornhill, ON L4J 1W6
Telephone: 905-731-9557 ext 307

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