

2014 - 2015 COMMUNITY REPORT





A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The East Hants Community Learning Association (EHCLA) believes in a strong and connected community and through individualized programming, we are opening the doors to education and transportation, helping create a more prosperous, and proud community.

With a hands-on learning approach, and the availability of transportation, we are empowering individuals to live with a sense of freedom and confidence. Everyone has the right to actively participate in their own lives and through our support we can help individuals live their lives to the fullest.

Understanding the educational needs of our community enables us to develop programming and offer opportunities for anyone to gain their GED, upgrade essential skills and get creative with learning. Parents, grandparents and neighbours are often a child's first teacher and through partnerships and programs, we support and encourage individual growth, helping families reach their learning potential.

The 2014-2015 year at EHCLA has been an exciting one. We have continued to offer our core Adult Learning Programs, Levels I, II & III, and we have had the opportunity to be creative by offering an employment preparation program, family literacy programs, as well as intergenerational learning programs.

Through funding received from a variety of sources, and feedback collected from participants, we continue meeting the varied learning needs of East Hants residents.

With the support of our talented and dedicated volunteer Board of Directors, EHCLA is guided towards the delivery of exceptional programming, while exercising fiscal prudence. Working with community partners and corporate members, EHCLA reaches as many residents as possible, all who benefit from our varied programs. Our aim is to address learning gaps, and meet the interests and needs of our community.

Finally, the programs we deliver maintain our high quality standards thanks to the skills and expertise of our extremely qualified staff. Our staff genuinely cares about the success of each and every participant we work with, and every member we transport.

In closing, 2014-2015 has been a very successful year and we look forward to all the exciting opportunities next year will bring.

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AND CONFIDENCE.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR COMMUNITY TRANSPORT MANAGER

The East Hants Community Rider (EHCR) is committed to delivering safe, affordable and accessible rides to all those facing a transportation challenge in our community, irrespective of age or mobility issues.

In 2013-2014, the Community Rider traveled 160,416 km, delivering a total of 7752 rides. In 2014-2015 we increased our travel by 19%, our rides by 10% and our membership by 20% - that's an extra 30,550 kilometers, 925 rides and 33 members!

Transportation is a key community issue, especially in rural Nova Scotia. EHCR helps seniors and other residents attend their medical appointments and other social events. With access to transportation, we help many individuals combat social isolation, and keep people in touch with their family and friends.

With the challenging winter we faced this past year, we were able to help pre-school children travelsafely from school to after school care.

Transportation determines how we get to the places where we live, work and play - it's essential.

The Community Rider is just as the name suggests, a safe, cost effective transportation service for all those in our community who need it. It is important that we believe, and act upon an equity agenda that is people-centered, protects our health, encourages sustainable communities and provides equal opportunity to enable growth and stimulate a vibrant economy.

EHCR staff and volunteers are special people, who care about their community and work hard to deliver a much needed community service. Thank you to everyone for their hard work and commitment.

2015-2016 looks to be an exciting year with lots to look forward to!

“THE EAST HANTS COMMUNITY RIDER WAS **EXTREMELY HELPFUL, ACCOMMODATING AND FRIENDLY**. THE VOLUNTEERS WENT OUT OF THEIR WAY TO ENSURE I WAS ABLE TO ATTEND ALL APPOINTMENTS AND WITHOUT THIS SERVICE I WOULD HAVE BEEN LEFT WITH NO TRANSPORTATION TO SEEK PROPER MEDICAL ATTENTION.

I AM **EXTREMELY GRATEFUL FOR OUR COMMUNITY HAVING SUCH A GREAT SERVICE.** ” - A MEMBER

In 2014/2015, the East Hants Community Rider

Traveled 190,966 km

Delivered 8,677 Rides

Reached 195 members

ENHANCING ADULT LEARNING

OUR ADULT LEARNING PROGRAMS I, II & III

Our programs runs four days a week in our Shubenacadie and Elmsdale classrooms. The learners work on literacy, math and life skills, and follow the provincial Adult Learning Program Curriculum. Throughout the year, we also provide students with the opportunity to engage in fun extra-curricular activities, projects and events that support their learning.

These programs are typically utilized for students to improve their life and social skills, begin their path to post secondary education or start preparing to write their GED.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Working together on a cookie mix project to benefit the Shumilac food bank! Planning amounts, shopping for ingredients, assembling the mix and successfully selling the finished product at the Maitland Craft Fair.

Teaching a class, sharing knowledge and practicing communications skills.

Getting creative, learning how to make cards and learning how to paint a landscape in acrylics.

Expressing personal stories with mixed media in an art program led by Dawn Josey.

Joining the Skills to Work class in planning and creating a tasty, healthy lunch. Cooking classes are always a favorite with learners, and there are many skills to learn in a grocery store and kitchen.

Visiting the new Halifax Public Library, bowling, going on a tour of the National Gypsum and experimenting at the Clay Café.

5 CROSSCUTTING THEMES
OF OUR COMMUNITY
LEARNING PROGRAMS

EMPLOYABILITY
LITERACY / COMPREHENSION

NUMERACY
INCLUSIVITY / DIVERSITY

TECHNOLOGY

OUR GED PREPARATION CLASSES

The Adult Learning Program and the GED Preparation Classes run four days and two evenings a week and our learners join us from a variety of backgrounds. The programs are extremely successful, maintaining a dynamic classroom and accommodating newly enrolled students throughout the year.

The Adult Learning Level III and GED Programs create and enhance a positive and safe learning environment for all students. Throughout the year, participants often support each other and develop strong relationships among themselves, and with our staff.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Collaborating and working together in a rocket building class as a way to foster team work and apply scientific/mathematical concepts in the real world.

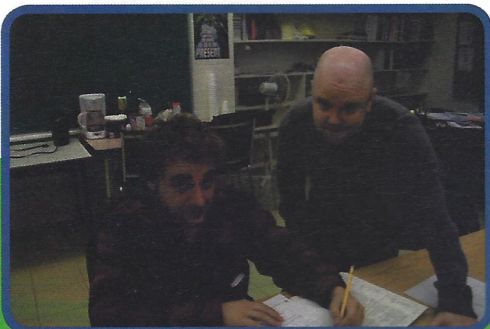
Celebrating with four students who passed modules towards their GED exams, seeing new skills develop and confidence grow.

Increasing readiness and skills to join the work-force and/or to continue on to further education.

COMPUTER COURSES

Senior citizens are seeing a world where their loved ones are communicating with ease, using technologies such as email, Facebook, cellular phones and tablets to connect with one another. However, many of our community members find themselves intimidated or frustrated with technology, and that's when our computer program can help.

Some people have not had the opportunity to work with computers in the same way that our younger generations have. Through our computer literacy course, we are helping adults gain experience, develop skills and facilitate positive relations with others using technology. Sharing photographs and using Skype to keep in touch with family members is just one of the benefits of our computer literacy course offers.



DEVELOPING SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS & EVENTS

SEWING

We received Positive Aging funding from the Department of Seniors, for an intergenerational learning program just before Christmas 2014. This seniors literacy funding provided a six week program to teach people who wanted to learn how to sew using a sewing machine, and the interest was fantastic. Over 15 people between the ages of 6 – 60 took part in the sewing program, held at the classroom of EHCLA. Elizabeth Grzesik and Jean Wright organized a great program, and participants learned how to make: a Christmas stocking, infinity scarves, Christmas tree ornaments, shopping style bags, as well as fleece scarves and mittens. It was a fun program and everyone went home able to show off their newly acquired talents.

RUG HOOKING

Seniors Literacy funding from the Positive Aging Fund also enabled us to offer a very popular intergenerational six week rug hooking class this winter.

Talented local artist, James Shedden, assisted by his partner Remi Roy, developed and delivered a fantastic and rewarding program for all ages who wanted to learn the traditional craft of rug hooking. 18 participants aged between 7 and 70 years of age, worked hard and created some beautiful pieces. Participants learned how to hook and finish a rug, learned about lots of different types of rug hooking, as well as a session on how to dye your own wool. James was a wonderful teacher and everyone had a lot of fun.

FALL PREVENTION

A very successful Falls Prevention session was held at the Enfield Fire Hall in February, 2015. This session was also part of the Positive Aging Funding from the Department of Seniors.

The session was well attended and covered a huge amount of very useful materials to prevent slips, trip and falls. Considering the snow and ice which started in February this year, the session could not have been more timely.

Thank you to our instructor Patrick Carruthers and to Jan Boswell at Community Links for partnering with us to deliver this wonderful session.



LAUNCHED INTERGENERATIONAL WORKSHOPS

SKILLS TO WORK

March 27, 2015 marked the conclusion of a third consecutive Skills to Work Program. Since September students of this program have been studying and practicing the basic skills necessary for employment through project-based learning, classroom study and practical experience.

Student success in this program has been considerable. The employment skills gained and personal growth seen by each participant, shows the effectiveness of this program. This year 85% of the students achieved successful outcomes as defined by the project. This is considerable, as Skills to Work students enter the program, experiencing significant barriers to employment.

The Skills to Work Program positively impacts the lives of it's students and the community. Investment into the Skills to Work program from the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services has proven effective in increasing the employment potential and confidence of those committed to the program. This course was developed to meet changing community, educational and technological needs of adult learners.

7 "SKILLS TO WORK STUDENTS"
GAINED EMPLOYMENT OR
CONTINUED THEIR EDUCATION

4 STUDENTS PASSED MODULES
TOWARDS THEIR GED

40 PEOPLE ATTENDED & LOVED
OUR COMPUTER LITERACY CLASS

19 PARTICIPANTS ATTENDED
INTERGENERATIONAL
RUG HOOKING CLASSES

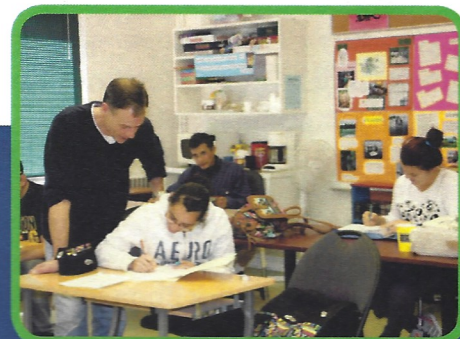
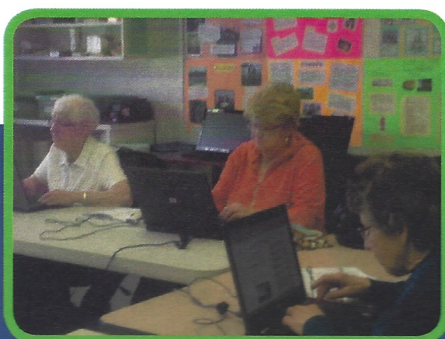
15 PARTICIPANTS EXPERIENCED
INTERGENERATIONAL SEWING
CLASSES, MAKING 5 ITEMS EACH

SUMMER PICNIC

In June 2014 EHCLA and EHCR, along with other partners EHFRC, Colchester East Hants Public Library, Literacy NS, & Raise a Reader hosted a "Spring into Summer" picnic. The picnic was great fun offering free books and magazines for all the family. There were lots of family friendly activities such as; colouring sheets, word search activities, not to mention soccer, Zumba, hula hoops and face painting. Plenty of blankets were provided for families to sit on and enjoy free pizza, drinks and ice popsicles. This event was a great awareness and appreciation event, and an opportunity for the community to come together to celebrate literacy.

DINNER THEATRE FUNDRAISING EVENT

EHCLA & EHCR were very fortunate in 2014 to be selected as one of the lucky recipients of the Elmsdale Legion Care Actors Dinner Theatre's. The Elmsdale Legion Care Actors work very hard writing, practicing and performing dinner theatre's, the proceeds of which are donated to support local non - profit organizations in East Hants. "Slap Happy Days" was a funny show that could rival professional performances in HRM, and raised several thousand dollars for our organization. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Elmsdale Legion Care Actors for all their hard work and commitment, which has truly benefited our community.



ENGAGING COMMUNITY MEMBERS FROM 7 - 70 YEARS OLD

COLLABORATING WITH PARTNERS

We believe in a collaborative community and throughout the year we have the opportunity to partner with East Hants Family Resource Centre on a number of exciting initiatives to increase and support family literacy.

ALPHABET SOUP IN MOTION

Alphabet Soup in Motion is a six-week program for parents/caregivers and children aged 3-5 years. EHCLA was proud to provide funding and aid in the facilitation of this program, where together parents and children explored outdoor activities, sang songs, learned rhymes and enjoyed healthy food.

Parents reported that they learned how to easily incorporate daily physical activities, decrease their children's screen time, and learned to try new foods.



LITTLE TREASURES

Little Treasures is a weekly parenting support and playgroup for parents under 25 years and their pre-school children. EHCLA provides an instructor to work with young parents to develop and support their educational goals.

This year Little Treasures had 14 parents join us. Four of the parents expressed an interest in completing their GED, and two are actively working on it.

MOMMY2B

Mommy2B is a 6-week prenatal program offered twice this year, funded through EHCLA and facilitate with the EHFRFC. There were a total of 21 moms-to-be and their partners involved, ranging in age from 17 to 37 years.

It is important to note that with Public Health no longer offering prenatal programs, ours is the only free prenatal program in the Corridor area.

As such we see a wide range of education and economic backgrounds in classes. For example, two of the moms-to-be had not completed high school, while two had their Masters' degree. Yet, learning together, they built strong relationships.

A highlight of this year's program was our ability to provide support to teaching staff of a local high school to incorporate pre-natal curriculum into one course that a participant needed to graduate.

THANK YOU

OUR FUNDERS

Community Health Board | Nova Scotia Department of Community Service | Nova Scotia Department of Energy, | Nova Scotia Moves | Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness | Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education | Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Relations | Nova Scotia Department of Seniors | Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund | Municipality of East Hants | Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning | PGI Nova Scotia | Raise a Reader | Royal Bank of Canada

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