



**Idanr** • Learning Disabilities  
Association of Niagara Region

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



## **Our Vision**

*LDA-Niagara Region's vision is that of a strong and inclusive society where individuals living with learning disabilities are confident, successfully educated, resilient and self-sustaining.*

## **Our Mission**

*Our purpose is to provide resources and support to individuals who are affected by learning disabilities within the Niagara Region. We provide leadership in learning disabilities advocacy, research, education and services, and advance the full participation in society of children, youth and adults with learning differences.*



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Learning Disabilities Association  
of Niagara Region

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Pinterest

*Learning Disabilities  
Association of Niagara Region*

## *Hello LDANR Members and Friends,*

On behalf of the LDANR Board of Directors it is a pleasure for me to be able to share with you a few words about our association. Our fiscal year came to a close at the end of March 2014 and during the past year we saw many successes. First and perhaps most importantly, LDANR saw great success with our literacy, social support, and advocacy programs that were offered at a number of locations throughout the region. These programs served over 400 individuals with learning disabilities and their families. I would like to congratulate the LDANR staff, facilitators, interns, research assistants, and volunteers supporting our programs. These people work tirelessly to ensure our programs are of the highest quality.

The agency also experienced a healthy financial year. As a non-profit organization, the LDANR relies solely on the generous financial commitments, donations, and grants from our members, community organizations, and granting agencies. This past year we ended our fiscal year with a small deficit. This was due to our Trillium grant coming to an end in November 2013. We were able to rely on our reserve funds to cover the deficit and I am happy to report we were successful in securing a three-year grant OTF grant that will bring us back to a balanced budget for the 2014/15 year. The LDANR Board of Directors along with Executive Director and staff are grateful for all of the generous financial support for the agency.

The 2014 year was unusual for the agency in that our Executive Director, Ashley Short was on maternity leave. In Ashley's absence we hired Charlotte Vergara as an

Administrative Assistant. Charlotte did an amazing job and was a terrific asset for the agency. Ashley returned to the Executive Director desk in September 2014 and we're looking forward to her initiatives for the coming year. I would also like to extend a special thanks to the LDANR staff including Sarah Farrell, Chantelle Kurzawa, and Annette Cotê. Our staff is the backbone to our day-to-day operations. Also, I would like to recognize the LDANR Board of Directors who volunteer their time to guide and support our agency. Our 2014 members included Karen Csoli, Lianne Fisher, Melissa Legros, Dawn Lagesten, Cynthia and Mario Palumbo, and Catherine Radimer

Finally, I wish to thank and congratulate everyone who has been a part of the LDANR over the past year. We have had a terrific year and I look forward to seeing our progress in 2014/15.

*John McNamara,*

*LDANR, Chair*

**MESSAGE FROM  
LDANR'S CHAIR**

**Chair: Dr. John  
McNamara**

**Secretary: Melissa  
Legros**

**Treasurer: Dawn  
Lagesten**

**Director: Dr. Karen  
Csoli**

**Director: Lianne  
Fisher**

**Director: Cynthia &  
Mario Palumbo**

**Director: Catherine  
Radimer**

**Executive Director:  
Ashley Short**

**Program  
Coordinator: Sarah  
Farrell**

**Project  
Coordinator:  
Chantelle Kurzawa**

**Bookkeeper:  
Annette Cote**

*Dear LDANR Members and Friends,*

I would like to begin my message by thanking the LDANR board of directors, staff, volunteers and members for the warm welcome back I have received, as I have returned from my maternity leave. The dedication, support and work that occurred in my absence is nothing less than inspiring. I am happy to be back with you all and would like to share the plans for the rest of our fiscal year and beyond.

LDANR is excited to have the opportunity through the Ontario Trillium Foundation grant to develop a corporate sponsorship strategy and donor campaign this year with the goal of securing sponsorships and increase agency donations during the second and final year of the grant. This will offset reliance on public grant monies to financially support our no-cost programming. LDANR believes in offering quality programming to any child with a learning disability in need. Socio-economic status should not be a barrier to these supports. Thank you to all of LDANR's granting agencies, which can be viewed in this report.

The agency will put together another trivia night for the third year in a row as another way to raise funds to support LDANR services. Another Boston Pizza night fundraiser will be organized as well. Please stay tuned on how to get involved in these events or connect with LDANR staff or board today to learn more!

A continued partnership with Brock University will assist in research being conducted on LDANR's programs over the course of this school year. The research team focuses on collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative program data that ensures the agency offers quality, evidence-based programming. As programming continues to expand, it is important to make improvements and updates as time goes by. Thank you to this year's dynamic research team and John McNamara for making this research possible.

LDANR will continue to sit on both local Special Education Advisory Committees for the District School board of Niagara and Niagara Catholic District School Board, to represent students with learning disabilities. We value our partnerships with both school boards and look forward to another year together.

Finally, I would like to ensure those involved with LDANR are aware of PPM8, which comes into effect January 2015. LDA-Ontario and it's chapters are excited about this policy and look forward to how it will improve supports to students living with a learning disability across the province.

*Ashley Short, Executive Director*

**MESSAGE FROM  
LDANR'S EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR**

# Treasurer's Report

By: Dawn Lagesten

Distributed separately are the audited Financial Statements for the year ended March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014

In order for the Organization to succeed each year, we rely on the continued support of everyone from our trusted staff and facilitators to our loyal volunteers and funders. I just wanted to say a big THANK YOU to everyone that commits their time and their support to the Organization, without that support we would not be where we are today.

The mission of the LDANR is not only to provide programming to those families affected by learning disabilities but also to educate the community and advocate for those affected by learning disabilities. Over the last year, some of our major contributors included - United Way of Niagara Falls and Greater Fort Erie, United Way of South Niagara, United Way of St. Catharines, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Business Education Council of Niagara, the Branscombe Family Foundation and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. With the support of these organizations, total revenues for the year increased to \$274,000.

The Organization had net expenses of \$2,300 in excess of revenues. Significant areas of increased expenses during the year included program facilitator fees, program supplies and wages and benefits. All increases are directly related to the growth in programs offered during the year requiring additional supplies and facilitators.

In looking toward next year, the Organization is looking forward to another successful year. With the approval for new grant funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Organization is excited about what the future will bring. The Organization will continue to look towards our major funders for their support to ensure the Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara Region is able to continue to support the individuals and their families who are affected by learning disabilities in the Niagara Region.

Each and every one of you contributes to the success of the Organization year after year; thank you again for making this Organization what it is today. We are looking forward to how the Organization can help even more Niagara Region families and continue to raise awareness about learning disabilities.

Thank you.

Dawn Lagesten, CPA, CA

## Financial Statements for the Year Ended March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014

<b>Revenues</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
Business Education Council of Niagara	52,835	38,875
Canadian Tire Financial Services	1,200	1,000
Niagara Community Foundation	1,500	500
The Branscombe Family Foundation	31,340	27,820
Ontario Trillium Foundation	42,457	34,943
United Way	107,771	87,163
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada	5,364	-
Bingo Revenue	7,228	7,986
Donations	3,788	2,023
Membership fees	4,319	2,136
Nevada income (schedule 1)	-	875
Other revenues	4,111	568
Program fees	12,852	11,390
<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>274,765</b>	<b>214,404</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Accounting and Bookkeeping	9,282	8,437
Bank charges and interest	1,282	641
Fixed asset purchases	961	107
Insurance	1,489	1,791
Memberships	222	247
Office supplies	1,392	2,199
Other expenses	1,162	953
Permits and rental fees	4,247	2,667
Photocopying expenses	4,203	4,180
Professional development	400	2,390
Program facilitator fees	87,394	37,425
Program supplies	10,169	16,527
Public awareness and advertising	1,430	1,308
Rent	7,200	7,200
Resource materials	-	2,942
Salaries and benefits	142,642	119,840
Telephone and internet	2,055	2,055
Travel	1,579	1,828
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>277,109</b>	<b>212,737</b>
<b>Excess of Expenses over Revenues for the year</b>	<b>(2,344)</b>	<b>1,667</b>



5 – 10% of children live with a learning disability. Many of these children are not identified or diagnosed, but still require support services and programs.

***The Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara Region is supported financially by grants, individual and corporate contributions, partner support, membership and program fees. Continued financial support is important to maintain LDANR's programs and services across the Niagara Region.***

***Monetary donations can be made in cash, by cheque, credit card or visit [www.ldaniagara.org](http://www.ldaniagara.org) to donate online. Cash and cheques are preferred, as it does not cost the agency processing fees. You will receive a donation receipt and recognition as a donor. Please visit our website to see what items are in need.***

***Signing up for a program? We ask families to make donations when involved in programming to help keep the programs low to no-cost.***

***Thank you for your ongoing support!***



### **Reading Rocks!**

Reading Rocks! is a 1 - 1 literacy program for children who struggle with their reading skills. Through this program children are matched up with literacy instructors who adapt a workstation and literacy program according to the child's needs (phonics, sight words, fluency).

This program is designed to support children with reading disabilities by working on their literacy skills, self-esteem and motivation. Offered in St. Catharines, Welland and Beamsville.



### **Reading Rocks Junior**

Reading Rocks Junior is a program that supports young children who are struggling with early literacy skills. Children work in small groups at workstations and receive some one-on-one support. A parent-component is included to increase parent's knowledge on the importance of early literacy and provide them with strategies and resources. Offered in St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, Thorold, Welland and Fonthill.



### **Let's R.E.A.D. READ, EXPLORE AND DISCOVER**

A literacy intervention program designed to support children (Grades 3-5) with an identified or non-identified learning disability. While participating in *Let's R.E.A.D.*, children will work on increasing their literacy skills, self-motivation, and confidence. Children will work within a small group setting and have the opportunity to work 1 - 1 with a literacy instructor in the area of their greatest need. Offered in Niagara Falls, Fort Erie and Port Colborne.



## **Better Emotional & Social Times** **B.E.S.T.**

B.E.S.T. covers topics such as problem solving, communication skills, self-regulation, asking for help, dealing with frustration and more! Through discussion, games, role-playing and direct instruction in small groups, children learn how to interact successfully and gain a better understanding of their strengths and areas of need while developing coping skills to allow them to learn better. Offered in St. Catharines.

## **Sunshine Learning Achievement & More (SLAM)**

Sunshine Learning Achievement & More is designed to support children with learning disabilities during summer vacation. Children spend approximately 50% of their time working on their literacy skills and approximately 50% of their time having fun with recreational activities (crafts, games, sports, swimming, etc.) and 100% of their time working on self-advocacy and social skills. Children will work and play in a friendly, supportive environment with low adult-child ratios.

## **Helping Others Parent Effectively** **H.O.P.E.**

H.O.P.E. formally offered through Niagara Region will continued to be offered through LDANR. Support program for caregivers of children with ADHD. Offered in St. Catharines.

Program details can be found at [www.Ldaniagara.org](http://www.Ldaniagara.org)

Remember! Follow LDANR on social media!

## What people are saying about LDANR programs...

My daughter loves the program and looks forward to it! This is her third session and it has been a positive experience.

-Reading Rocks, 2013

Not only did my child learn from this experience, she has lots of fun at the same time... We would be more than happy to participate in your program again.

-Reading Rocks Junior, 2013

The facilitators were kind, patient and overwhelmingly encouraging to all of the students.

-B.E.S.T., 2013

The Reading Rocks Junior program has been a positive influence on my son. He enjoys coming to the program twice a week and telling me what he has learned. His reading is improving week by week and, in turn, this is building his confidence too. I am very pleased with the program and will continue to enroll my son again.

-Reading Rocks Junior, 2014

The Let's R.E.A.D. program has been great for [my daughter]. She has progressed in her PM benchmarks at school since she started the program last fall. She is definitely more confident in her reading. She looks forward to going every week. She is very happy with the helpers; they have been wonderful. We will definitely be continuing with the program.

-Let's R.E.A.D., 2013

The strengths of the program are the tutors, they have a zest for teaching that the kids feel, and it makes learning enjoyable.

-Reading Rocks, 2013

We are so happy with the programs that you provide! Honestly, I cannot believe that putting our boys in these programs can, have, and continue to make such a difference. We thank you!

-S.L.A.M., 2013

LDANR has a good sense of what children (and their families) who have learning disabilities need. They understand their strengths and weaknesses of these kids.

-Reading Rocks, 2013

What I observed [from the program] was children connecting with each other; children being taught that they have many strengths to share and children being valued for their unique learning styles.

-B.E.S.T., 2013

First off, I wanted to say thank you for giving [my child] this opportunity. He had such an amazing time at camp. The motivation he is showing is mind blowing... He had me in tears hearing him talk about being a team player and sharing. We have been able to talk about his day where he normally says, "I forget." I am so grateful we found you!

S.L.A.M., 2014

## Thank you to the following...

### Volunteers

Kaitlyn Acheson  
Natalie Adamyk  
Susan Adgey  
Ardita Ajvazi  
Mikayla Allen  
Karie Balon  
Sutherland Barnett  
Karen Beltran  
Nicole Benner  
Julie Bolton  
Kathryn Boundy  
Kayla Bradshaw  
Kamaljot Brar  
Katelyn Brausewetter  
Kaitlin Bronn  
Sherry Butler  
Megan Carr  
Maggie Carter  
Victoria Caruana  
Kirsten Cerminara  
Erika Chapman  
Mikaela Charlebois  
Julie Choi  
Leah Cipparone  
Sloane Clarkson  
Britney Coffin

Matthew Colling  
Cheryl Corris  
Charla-May Cooper  
Tim Crawford  
Maureen Cripps  
Alea Cullen  
Alfonso D'Ambra  
Chelsea Davis  
Erin Davis  
Sarah de Almeida  
Nikita Desai  
Ann-Marie DiBartolomeo  
Ray Ding  
Lianne Esmores  
Arielle Faber  
Debbie-Ann Fender  
Leann Finley  
Christine Froehlich-Fivey  
Ayla Fyke  
Dyson Fyke  
Lindsey Gerrard  
Justin Gibson  
Jonathan Giles  
Kendrick Gilmour  
Michael Goddard  
Alex Graham

Aleshia Grano  
Jaycee Graves  
Vanessa Greco  
Ryann Harrington  
Muhammad Hassan  
Sarah Hayter  
Samantha Helmeczi  
Rachel Herridge  
Kelsey Holmes  
Emily Hopkins  
Ashley Jacinto  
Kim Jungin  
Sydney Kerr  
Brooke Kunder  
Nikki Kwiatkowski  
Ashley Lake  
Cassie Lavelle  
Theresa Lawrason  
Jennifer Lee  
Amy Lin  
Jose Linto  
Leah Liu  
Chantell Louwerse  
Jamie Lupia  
Debbie MacIntyre  
Kevin Maidment

Melody Maloney  
Ashley Manuel  
Lora Mateo  
Emily Mathieson  
Katelyn McCarl  
Jane McClure  
Carolyn McConnell  
Stephanie McCorriston  
Kristi McDougall  
Morgan Medd  
Marissa Melanson  
Barlow Michelle  
Cole Millard  
Alicia Miller  
Kristina Modica  
Magda Mohos  
Dana Monterosso  
Donna Murphy Del-Cueto  
Jessica Myronuk  
Emily Napper  
Warren O'Brien  
Elizabeth Pollard  
Alysha Pula  
Evelyn Qing  
Ibrahim Qureshi  
Juliette Rahmoun  
Daniela Ramirez

## Thank you to the following...

### Volunteers

Sarah Remillard  
Nicole Renton  
Jessica Richards  
Ryan Ridler  
Marc Rosati  
Colin Roy  
Jessica Sacitharan  
Jessica Salvagna  
Randi Sargeson  
Ava Sarkis  
Jasmine Schoug  
Fiona Scott  
Robyn Selvan  
Nicole Sheppard  
Jesse Shortt  
Erica Singer  
Nikita Singh  
Sana Sleiman  
Angela Smith  
Kristen Smyth  
Karolina Spiak  
Rachel St. Hilaire  
Jessica Stewart  
Erica Sullivan  
Karen Tamayo  
Julia Taylor  
Helen Tkach

Janet Tkach  
Mitchell Tkach  
Paul Tkach  
Rochelle Tkach  
Truelove Twumasi  
Jessica VanDerKley  
Monica Vilamarim  
John Walker  
Cassie Watts  
Amy Wilcox  
Cherisse Wong Kang  
Nicholas Xia  
Rebecca Young  
Allina Zachariasz

### Placement Students

Rebecca Basken  
Katelyn Carter  
Leah Cipparone  
Rachel Cranfield  
Alicia Dell  
Souzan El-Chazli  
Tamar Finkelstein  
Emma Jacques  
Stephanie Landry  
Carleigh Lemke

Kerri Michaud  
Laura Neu  
Abby Ogilvie  
Stephanie Riopel  
Lexi Sherriff  
Vanessa Spizzirri  
Lesley Taylor  
Bridget Veltri  
Kimberly Visser  
Heather Wallace

### Facilitators

Brittani Ali  
Mikayla Allen  
Megan Arndt  
Lisa Bain  
Karie Balon  
Michelle Barlow  
Sarah Boulton  
Tien Bui  
Maurayah Burattini  
Kelly Burns  
Tina Chivers  
Sloane Clarkson  
Sarah Copfer  
Janine Corbin

Lindsay Dalli  
Shirley Delaney  
Tiffany Derksen  
Kelsey Dick  
Lisa DiMartile  
Lisa Doddridge  
Amanda Donbrindt  
Julie Galambos  
Jonathan Giles  
Kristen Golia  
Melanie Grice  
Deirdre Henry  
Jenna Hodder  
Emily Hunter  
Erica Hutton  
Bobby Kaspar  
Carly Klassen  
Brigette LeBlanc  
Stefanie Macaro  
Kendra MacPherson  
Charlotte Mahy  
Victoria Maxmen  
Kristi McDougall  
Ashley Montague  
Rose Perri

*Thank you to the following...*

### Facilitators

Krista Pomazanskyj  
Linda Rogers  
Sarah Ruiten-Wood  
Dave Sadonoja  
Hilary Scruton  
Sam Sendzik  
Kristina Sielicki  
Crystal Smith  
Natalie Spadafora  
Dana Szabo  
Rochelle Tkach  
Tracy Tkaczyk  
Charlotte Vergara  
Kathy Wensink

### Research Assistants

Sarah-Dawn Carnegie  
Sarah de Almeida  
Katrien Eccelstone  
Kelsey Green  
Melanie Grice  
Hilary Scruton



*Don't have time to work within a program? No problem! There are many ways you can lend a hand and support those living with a LD!*

For 85-90% of poor readers, prevention and early intervention programs can increase their reading skills to average reading levels.

YOU can make a difference!

Lend a hand and become an advocate, volunteer, sponsor, donor, facilitator, fundraiser, or simply help spread the word!

To join the LDANR team, visit [www.ldaniagara.org](http://www.ldaniagara.org)

**Volunteer intake form online!**

# Thank you to our Funders...

Ontario  
Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium  
de l'Ontario

*Reading Rocks  
B.E.S.T.*



*St. Catharines  
South Niagara  
Niagara Falls & Greater Fort Erie  
(Programming & services)*



*Sunshine Learning  
Achievement & More!*



*Reading Rocks Junior*

Thank you to those  
who contributed to  
LDANR's fundraising!



# **Idanr** • Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara Region

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*The right to learn, the power to achieve*

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## LDANR Office

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