



Idanr • Learning Disabilities
Association of Niagara Region

ANNUAL REPORT

2022



United Way
Niagara

Proud community Partner

Our Vision

The Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara Region (LDANR)'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

LDANR's 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.

The LDANR acknowledges that the land on which the LDANR is located is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples and acknowledging reminds us that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous people.



2022-2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Board Chair Message

Dear LDANR Members and Friends,

Firstly, I would like to personally thank our past and current board members, coordinators, program staff and volunteers for their dedication and enthusiasm they have brought or bring to their roles. As a non-profit organization, LDANR can only achieve success with your hard work and dedication. Of special note, we are very excited to welcome back Madeline Cipriano who is joining us again as a coordinator as she and her family have moved back to Ontario. Your expertise and dedication ensures that LDANR is well placed for the future.

LDANR is incredibly thankful for its generous sponsors and donors. Without you, we would not be able to offer the programming and financial support for our families. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight just some of the ways that some of our sponsors help us. The United Way continues to fund our after-school programs. The Branscombe Family Foundation funds our summer SLAM camp. Delta Bingo continues to provide non-directed funds to support our programs and services. The Niagara Community Foundation funds subsidies for our summer camps. The Ontario Trillium Foundation funded our transition programs. The Humeniuk Foundation funds our social support opportunities. We thank all these sponsors and all of the volunteers and supporters with our annual fundraisers such as our Trivia Night and Golf Event.

The 2022-2023 year has hallmarked some exciting initiatives:

- LDANR piloted TIPS for Post Secondary in partnership with Niagara Catholic and DSBN. This program supports students in Grades 11 and 12 who are preparing for post secondary education and helps them navigate the transition process. We are grateful for funding provided by the Ontario Trillium Foundation to get this initiative off the ground.
- LDANR held its most successful Trivia Night to date. We were thrilled to have this event once again in person. It was a fun night for everyone involved and we look forward to continuing this in the coming year.
- LDANR partnered with fellow LDA chapters to offer an annual parent conference that was well attended by parents across the province in May of 2022.
- LDANR returned to offer our summer camps at full capacity. In listening to parents, there was a strong desire for these to be run in person and we were happy to accommodate.
- LDANR reintroduced in person after school programming to meet the needs of our families as we moved to a virtual on-line learning environment during COVID.
- LDANR implemented a new staff, volunteer and client management system to improve efficiency which is in line with our strategic plan objectives.
- LDANR continues to update policies and procedures to ensure that we are well placed for many years to come.

In closing, on behalf of the entire LDANR board, we offer gratitude and appreciation to the greater community. We love doing what we do, and we look forward to continuing our mission in working with our families, volunteers, staff, sponsors, and donors to provide opportunities for our children and their families so that they may thrive in everyday life.

Wishing you all the best and thank you for your continued support,

Mark Casburn
Board Chair

Executive Director Message

2022-2023
OFFICE STAFF

Dear LDANR Community,

Although the pandemic continues to shape the way our organization operates even three years later, the 2022-2023 year was the first year since 2019 that the LDANR felt a sense of normalcy. We were able to find our stride again and settle back into a routine, which we hope that you were able to do as well.

Over the 2022-2023 year, all of us at the LDANR have been busy behind the scenes taking what we learned over the course of the pandemic and putting it into practice to enhance our organization. For example, we have learned how unpredictable the future can be, even from one day to the next, and how important it is to have back-up plans in the event of major business disruptions. As such, we spent the year creating continuity plans and revising our procedures to reflect new systems and practices put in place.

More specifically, our organization has been hard at work since the Fall of our 2022-2023 year putting our strategic plan goals, such as streamlining data collection, into action which included implementing a cloud-based client, staff, and volunteer data management solution (Better Impact). Ultimately, the shift to using this platform has allowed us to work more efficiently, especially in a virtual capacity, reduced the redundancy of required tasks, and made your data and information more secure – which is crucial in an increasingly digital world. We sincerely want to thank all of you for your patience as we work to refine our processes to best meet our agency's needs and the needs of our clients, staff and volunteers.

Meanwhile, in the forefront, we evolved and adapted both our existing and new programs to satisfy the needs of the Learning Disability community. We continued to offer our popular reading and math support programs, and increased social support opportunities, such as support groups, in accordance with our strategic goals. We were also thrilled to partner with the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) and the Niagara Catholic District School Board (Niagara Catholic) over the 2022-2023 academic year to offer programming to support the transition to post-secondary education.

The LDANR is so appreciative of the unwavering support of our community partners, funders, and donors, as well as our amazing volunteers and staff who dedicate a tremendous number of hours each season, and work to ensure the success of our programs and services.

It is a pleasure to work alongside all of you to empower individuals with learning disabilities across Niagara to recognize their strengths, abilities, and potential.

Samantha Sendzik-Sinclair
Executive Director

**Samantha
Sendzik-Sinclair**
Executive Director

Emily Morrison
Literacy Program
Coordinator

**Ushna Malik &
Madeline Cipriano**
Math Coordinator &
Administrative Assistant

**Madeline Maguire &
Taylor Lloyd**
Self-Advocacy Program
Coordinator

Emily Glencross
Community Outreach
Coordinator

Annette Cote
Bookkeeper

Financials

Learning Disabilities Association Of Niagara Region
Statement of Operations
Year Ended March 31, 2023

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|------------|------------|
| Revenues | | |
| Grant revenue <i>(schedule 2)</i> | \$ 224,639 | \$ 237,026 |
| Operating revenue <i>(schedule 1)</i> | 57,782 | 53,441 |
| Fundraising income <i>(schedule 3)</i> | 42,667 | 28,416 |
| Program partnerships | 35,169 | 7,521 |
| Donations | 16,707 | 8,200 |
| Sponsorships | 8,300 | 3,675 |
| Interest <i>(Note 4)</i> | 4,463 | 1,097 |
| Government assistance | - | 8,404 |
| | 389,727 | 347,780 |
| Expenses | | |
| Salaries and benefits | 301,066 | 264,198 |
| Rent <i>(Note 5)</i> | 18,000 | 18,000 |
| Supplies | 12,514 | 11,988 |
| Accounting and bookkeeping | 10,530 | 15,520 |
| Permits and rental fees | 7,178 | 8,005 |
| Telephone and internet | 2,678 | 3,489 |
| Office supplies | 2,368 | 1,124 |
| Resources expenses | 2,000 | 1,500 |
| Insurance | 1,851 | 1,803 |
| Fundraising expenses | 1,836 | 205 |
| Interest and bank charges | 1,744 | 1,828 |
| Payroll fees | 1,440 | 1,206 |
| Training | 1,018 | 479 |
| Staff and board events | 640 | 229 |
| Memberships | 249 | 281 |
| Travel | 241 | 79 |
| Public awareness and advertising | 210 | 47 |
| Website and computer costs | 116 | 312 |
| Photocopying expenses | 95 | 132 |
| | 365,774 | 330,425 |
| Excess of revenues over expenses | \$ 23,953 | \$ 17,355 |

Fundraising & Events

As a non-profit, the LDANR relies heavily on fundraising initiatives to ensure we can deliver high-quality and affordable programs and services to individuals across Niagara.

Over the 2022-2023 year, we were thrilled to return to hosting our regular fundraising initiatives in-person, including our Golf Tournament, Trivia Night, and Niagara Ice Dogs fundraisers. In fact, our Trivia Night held in March 2023 was our most successful to date, both in the amount raised and attendance!



LDANR staff Taylor Lloyd (left) and Emily Morrison (right) at our Niagara Ice Dogs Fundraiser, March 2023

In May 2022, we also partnered with our fellow LDA Chapters across Ontario to offer a virtual parent conference, which featured a keynote speaker and a choice of three different breakout sessions on various topics relating to learning disabilities. This conference was attended by parents across Ontario as part of a chapter-led initiative.



LDANR staff (left to right): Paige Vaccarella, Emily Glencross, Samantha Sendzik-Sinclair, Emily Morrison, and Madeline Cipriano at our Golf Tournament Fundraiser, June 2022



LDANR's Trivia Night Fundraiser, March 2023

Over the 2022-2023 year, the LDANR also continued to raise money from charitable gaming centres Delta Bingo Niagara Falls and Delta Bingo St. Catharines. The Ontario Charitable Gaming Association's new slogan, "Charitable Gaming. Community Good." truly captures how their funds are being put to good use by charities to do good in the community, and we are so grateful to be a recipient of these funds year after year.

Fundraising & Events

Annual Appreciation Dinner

The LDANR was pleased to host our Annual Appreciation Event back in-person in April 2023 to celebrate all we accomplished over the 2022-2023 year.

We were joined by MPP Jennie Stevens to recognize the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) for their support of our transition programming, particularly LDANR's SOAR to Secondary and TIPS for Post-Secondary programs.



MPP Jennie Stevens (left) and LDANR staff Ushna Malik (right) at LDANR's Appreciation Event, April 2023



Left to right: Emily Morrison, Mackenzie McRae, Sarah Johnston, Mikayla Johnston at LDANR's Appreciation Event, April 2023

We were also fortunate to have a program family in attendance who spoke about the impact of the work LDANR does in the community. Sarah and her daughter bravely shared their story and how being involved with the LDANR has made a positive difference in their family.

Lastly, of course, we also took the time to recognize each of our award winners, featured on the next page. In addition, we thanked our award winners from the 2019-2020, 2020-2021, and 2021-2022 years whom we were unable to properly acknowledge during the pandemic.

Fundraising & Events

Annual Appreciation Dinner Award Winners

2022-2023 Instructor of the Year Khadijah Ladhani

In her time as a program facilitator, Khadijah was always eager to provide support to the program participants, families, and volunteers in any way she could. Khadijah ensured that the Program Coordinator was kept up to date about the programs, and was great at communicating with parents. She is organized, kind, hard-working, and an absolute pleasure to have as a part of our LDANR team (in all of the programs she's been a part of)! Thank you, Khadijah!

2022-2023 Volunteer of the Year Katerina Karadimas

Despite being a busy university student, Katerina has remained dedicated to the LDANR, volunteering her time with the Reading Rocks program. Katerina provides fun and engaging learning experiences for our students, and parents of her students have reached out and praised her for her ability to connect with their children and for always making learning fun. Thank you so much for all your hard work and dedication!

2022-2023 Outstanding Contributor Niagara Catholic District School Board

In the 2022-2023 year, we had the privilege of strengthening our relationship with the Niagara Catholic District School Board (Niagara Catholic)'s Special Education Department to support students with learning disabilities, specifically through our transition programming. We partnered to offer both our SOAR to Secondary high-school transition program and our TIPS for Post-Secondary college/university transition program. This award was our way of thanking Niagara Catholic for recognizing the importance of this support; a testament to their continued commitment to ensuring students with learning disabilities can reach their full potential!



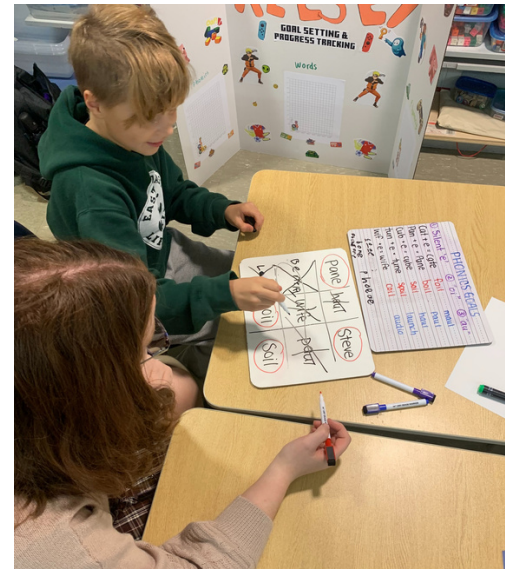
Danny Giancola, Niagara Catholic (left) accepting the Outstanding Contributor Award from Samantha Sendzik-Sinclair, Executive Director (right)

Reading Rocks

Grades 1-8

Reading Rocks is an individualized reading intervention program designed by Brock University's Dr. John McNamara. Participants work one-to-one with a trained tutor to enhance their literacy skills such as phonics principles, sight word knowledge, and reading fluency.

Between April 2022 to March 2023, LDANR offered a total of 180 Reading Rocks program spots thanks to United Way Niagara, with support from the Ontario Power Generation, Kiwanis St. Catharines, Staples, and the District School Board of Niagara. 40 of these spots were offered in-person, while 140 of the spots were offered online.

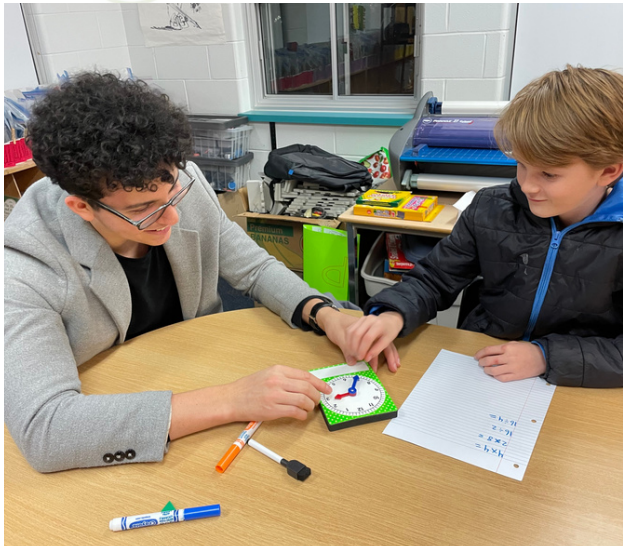


"Definitely wish my daughter would have been coming earlier! Most tutors and places didn't understand the struggles of what my daughter was going through and didn't know the right methods to teach her to learn. She was excited to go to every session and that was a huge difference because in the past it was a fight to go. Her confidence blossomed! We saw such a positive impact we have now signed up her younger sister."

Parent, Reading Rocks, Fall 2022



JUMP Math[®]
Grades 1-8



JUMP Math is a curriculum-aligned classroom math program developed by John Mighton, PhD, OC, who founded JUMP Math to give every child the opportunity to successfully learn and enjoy math and achieve their full potential. JUMP Math also offers an excellent structured intervention program, which the LDANR uses to deliver an individualized tutoring program for students with a math-specific learning disability.

Between April 2022 to March 2023, LDANR offered a total of 40 JUMP Math program spots thanks to United Way Niagara. 20 of these spots were offered in-person, while 20 of the spots were offered online.

Programs & Services

S.L.A.M. Camp

Ages 9-11

S.L.A.M. (Sunshine, Learning, Achievement & More) Camp is LDANR's full-day summer literacy camp. Participants spend half of the camp day engaged in fun literacy activities, and the other half on recreation and social skill activities.

In Summer 2022, LDANR offered a total of 240 S.L.A.M. Camp program spots thanks to The Branscombe Family Foundation, with support from The Niagara Community Foundation and The Government of Canada.



"I just wanted to take a moment to share with you what an amazing experience [my son] has had at camp. I have to tell you that camps have not always been such a positive experience and leading up to the first day I was very anxious. [My son] was excited and seemed to forget past trials and started with a great attitude. When he reported back he had such a great time the first few days I hate to admit it, but we thought oh it's the honeymoon days, and I was waiting for the other shoe to drop. Guess what?? It never did. [My son] found somewhere so inclusive and understanding of him. As a mother, there isn't anything more I could ask for. Thank you, his time at SLAM has been so meaningful and positive more than we could ever ask for."

Parent, S.L.A.M. Camp, Summer 2022

Youth-to-Youth (Y2Y)

Ages 13-18

The Youth-to-Youth (Y2Y) program aims to support youth by creating a space where they can explore issues of concern together. The monthly sessions create a safe and inclusive environment for youth with learning disabilities to meet and share their struggles and strategies for success.

The 2022-2023 academic year was the second year that the Y2Y program took place. The program, which is supported by The Humeniuk Foundation, was offered virtually, and served 7 students between the ages of 13-18. As a result of low Y2Y program enrolment, and in response to feedback received from parents/guardians, in Fall 2023 the LDANR will instead be offering an in-person student social group.

Programs & Services

B.E.S.T.

Grades 3-5

Better Emotional & Social Times ("B.E.S.T.") is a small-group, self-advocacy and coping skills program for children in grades 3-5 who are experiencing secondary characteristics associated with learning difficulties (i.e., low self-esteem, poor social and/or emotional regulation).

Between April 2022 to March 2023, LDANR offered a total of 30 B.E.S.T. program spots thanks to United Way Niagara. 20 of these spots were offered in-person, while 10 of the spots were offered online.



"I wanted to thank you and your staff for the great job that they did on the B.E.S.T. program. [My son] really enjoyed the B.E.S.T. program, and he seemed to look forward to each class. I know he really admired the instructors, and they did a great job connecting with the kids, and keeping the program on track."

Parent, B.E.S.T., Spring 2022



Webinar Series

Grades 1-8

Over the 2022-2023 academic year, the LDANR offered a webinar series that included webinars on topics such as Mental Health & LDs and Executive Functioning. In total during the 2022-2023 year, we received 115 webinar registrations, averaging about 14 per webinar.

Compared to the 2021-2022 year, we noticed a decline in webinar registrations, perhaps in part by the return to in-person activities and busy schedules. In Fall 2023, the LDANR will instead be offering an in-person parent social group based on feedback received from parents/guardians.

Programs & Services

Transition Programming

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the LDANR was fortunate enough to receive a Resilient Communities grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) to support our two transition programs, namely our SOAR to Secondary ("SOAR") and TIPS for Post-Secondary ("TIPS") programs which focus on supporting students through vulnerable transition periods in an effort to set them up for success.



Between April 2020 and December 2022, LDANR spent time developing and refining the curriculum for the TIPS program, thanks to funding from The Rotary Club of St. Catharines with support from The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario. LDANR piloted the program, previously titled "SOAR Post-Secondary", as an after-school program during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 years, however participation was low. During the 2022-2023 year, thanks to OTF funding, LDANR partnered with the Niagara Catholic District School Board and the District School Board of Niagara to pilot the new TIPS curriculum as a full-day workshop, offered during the school day. During April and May 2023, we were able to offer 30 TIPS program spots.

Also as a result of the OTF funding, LDANR offered 20 SOAR program spots during the 2022-2023 fiscal year, with an additional 10 SOAR spots offered during the 2023-2024 year. In addition, in Spring 2022, LDANR partnered with Niagara Catholic District School Board to offer the SOAR program to 50 students.

"She understands more about herself and her own IEP. It helps to arm us all with knowledge and the support helps us emotionally feel more connected to a community that understands our family and our family's needs better than many others. Without the support of the LDANR, we would be floundering and feel more isolated and less prepared for moving forward on our learning journey."

Parent, SOAR, Winter 2023

CHAMPS

CHAMPS is an after-school drop-in program that runs in partnership with United Way Niagara and The RAFT. CHAMPS specifically runs as an instructional component to United Way's After School Matters program, and intends to provide homework assistance and an extra learning experience for the children.

During the 2022-2023 year, CHAMPS was offered at three St. Catharines locations - Rykert, Manchester and Grantham.

Programs & Services

Staff & Volunteers



Program Volunteers & Placement Students

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Abbey Retta | Carter Schaefer |
| Adenuga Mofe | Chloe Riddoch |
| Adriana Popovic | Claire Majer |
| Akanksha Guleria | Cloe Johnston |
| Aleah Sawatzky | Dalyah Schiarizza |
| Alec Chunta | Emily Haebe |
| Alexandria Schellenberg | Emma Constantinescu |
| Allison Earle | Emma Kate Jeffery |
| Ally Barrett | Emma Wellman |
| Alyssa Breen | Emma Winder |
| Alyssa Guernsey | Erika Borango |
| Alyssa McInnes | Eunseon Kim |
| Amy Moller | Fatima Noor |
| Amy Wilson | Favour Adodo |
| Andjela Kosevic | Gazal Kashyap |
| Andraya Juresic | Gillian Gooding |
| Andrea Thackorie | Grace Chretien |
| Angela Larrakker | Hanna Connolly |
| Anju Matthew | Hannah Moses |
| Anna Wilson | Heather Tuck |
| Ashley Ryzdik | Ifeyinwa (Ify) Obikwelu |
| Asmara Kaleem | Isabel Nunes |
| Aysha Murray | Isha Brar |
| Brianna Regan | Ishaan Sachdeva |
| Brie Arnold | Jacqueline Chen |
| Brielle Reeve | Jana Bataineh |
| Brooke Roussy | Jaspreet Kaur |
| Caitlin Carter | Jenna Pilon |
| Caitlin McCarthy | Jessica Moran |
| Calourin Shehata | Jordan Mostboeck |
| Carli Dortono | |

Program Staff

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Adalton Stephenson | Maddy Candy |
| Alexa Oakley | Madeleine Malong |
| Alyssa Kovacs | Madi Maguire |
| Amy Stricko | Madison Puppa |
| Brooke Roussy | Michelle Blanchette |
| Chelsea Russell | Muhammed 'Oz' Aziz |
| Cristina Howarth | Natalie Weber |
| Elizha Caragay | Nicole Perry |
| Emily Polley | Paige Vaccarella |
| Erica Simmanivong | Raisah Mehrali |
| Hanna Puffer | Robin Kim |
| Heather Matthews | Samantha Strayer |
| Julia Zaniol | Sara Palewicz |
| Kelsey Cere | Sydney Engel |
| Khadijah Ladhani | Taylor Lloyd |
| Lilian Wang | Teagan Baldwin |
| Mackenzie McRae | Ushna Malik |
| Mackenzie Tiffin | Yamini Singh |

Staff & Volunteers



Program Volunteers & Placement Students Cont'd

Juanjuan (Jennifer) Cheng

Julia Purser

Julie Do

Justin Wimmer

Kaelen Worrall

Kaitlyn Chilvers

Kaiya Herr

Kaiya Kawa

Kamila Bednarczyk

Katelyn Majaury

Katerina Karadimas

Katie Williams

Kelsey Cere

Kennedy Papetti

Kevin Calayag

Krystina Kulina

Kyra Dailey

Kyrstin Duquette

Lauren Van Laecke

Leah Peter

Leah Barbe

Livia Cardoso

Logan Vivian

Mackenzie McRae

Maddy Candy

Madison Puppa

Maha Medhat

Marco Pinelli

Marisa Romanyk

Maryam Mir

Maryum Majid

Meg Arsenault

Megan Pelletier

Megan Stickley

Meghan Corry

Mia Dalfuoco

Michelle Blanchette

Mikayla Meeussen

Mofe Adenuga

Nancy Mauro

Nancy Thiessen

Nazia Omer

Nicolas Wilson

Nicole Coens

Nicole De Stefano

Nicole Mackin

Nicole Perry

Nikole Tavares

Ola Hamid

Olivia King

Pat Robinson

Preeti Ahluwalia

Prue Grominsky

Raquell Fernando

Rayyan Iftikhar

Regan Macdonald

Robin Kim

Roma Kuepfer

Rory Watson

Samantha Dortono

Samantha Dupont

Saniti Sharma

Sara Palewicz

Sarah Battrick

Sarah Martin

Satjot Sahai

Selena Feng

Shannon McLeod

Shayan Heybati

Shelby Vollmershausen

Sofia DeSousa

Sophie Motoban

Sophie Pullen

Surbhi Angral

Tabi Sheppard

Taylor Woodford

Tingting Gao

Trisha Beam

Tritee Basu

Valerie Beck Slatter

Vanessa Corman

Victoria Heilbron

Victoria Slykhuis

Victoria Vella

Walker Haight

Wilson Nicolas

Winslet Lo

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spread the word!

To join the LDANR team, visit
www.LDANiagara.org

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Association of Niagara Region

The right to learn, the power to achieve

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