

# 2019 Annual Report



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

*The right to learn, the power to achieve*



**United Way**  
Niagara

A United Way Funded Agency

## 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.



# 2018 – 2019 Board of Directors

Jayne Morrish  
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*Director*

Corine Demore  
*Director*

Jessica Petrella  
*Directors*

Robbin St. Pierre  
*Director*

## A Message from LDANR'S Chair

Dear LDANR Members and Friends,

As I look back on the 2018-2019 year, I see a year full of growth and partnerships. We have welcomed many new staff members, co-op students, volunteers and even this evening seeing new Board Members around the table. It is clear that the LDANR is growing and flourishing – all with one goal in mind, to create a strong and inclusive society where individuals living with learning disabilities are confident, successfully educated, resilient and self-sustaining.

A year in review, we have seen:

- 200 volunteers
- Over 600 Participant Spots filled
- 8 office staff
- 67 instructors
- 7 programs
- 2 summer interns
- 7 fundraising events
- 8 Board of Directors

In terms of growth, one of the major areas has been within our programming. As we recognize that LDs are not a fluid concept, nor do they exist within a social and political vacuum, we have worked to continually evolve our programming offerings to meet our participants and their families where they are, and support the distinct and unique needs of our community. One specific area of growth that I am excited to see us leaning into is around transitions between various aspects of education – such as from elementary to high school, and then high school to post-secondary. The LDANR sees itself as an advocate for children with LDs and their families, and we hope that our ever-evolving programming and efforts match that. Some other areas of growth include our staff and board – I would like to formally welcome all new LDANR team members who were not here at the last AGM. Thank you for becoming a part of our efforts!

In terms of partnerships, this year has brought many new organizations and individuals into the LDANR family – for example, we presented Brock University with the Outstanding Contributor Award this year, and look forward to growing partnerships with other contributors in the coming years. From speaking with our partners, it is clear that LDs have touched almost everyone's life in a personal manner, and are an area of focus close to many people's hearts. I am hopeful that LDs will become a larger focus across various sectors, helping to celebrate and understand everyone's unique learning style and create a multifaceted system where each individual is able to thrive, flourish and succeed. I am hopeful that throughout the next year the LDANR is able to work with more champions for our cause, bringing LDs into the forefront of everyday discussions around learning and literacy.

Our continued success would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of the LDANR team. I would like to take the time to thank and recognize all of the LDANR staff, volunteers, funders, and the entire Board of Directors. Every person that speaks with an LDANR team member always comments on how dedicated and inspiring your passion is. We would not be able to offer the support or make the impact that we do without all of you. Thank you to each and every person and organization who worked with and supported the LDANR this year. I look forward to continuing to work with all of you in the coming years!

In closing, we are so grateful to be able to work with our program families and sponsors, the LDANR family is ever growing. As always, I am very optimistic about the LDANR's next phase of growth and change. We have such a strong team and community with us, and together I think that we can make a true impact in Niagara and beyond.

*Jayne Morrish, MA  
Board Chair*

## 2018 – 2019 Staff

Samantha Sendzik  
*Executive Director*

Brittani Ali  
*Program Coordinator*

Emily Glencross  
*Program Coordinator*

Morgan Little  
*Program Coordinator*

Sara Warriner  
*Program Coordinator*

Lauren Calvert  
*Project Coordinator*

Chantelle Kurzawa  
*Project Coordinator (Maternity  
Leave)*

Stephanie McCorrison  
*Math Coordinator*

Annette Cote  
*Bookkeeper*

## A Message from LDANR'S Executive Director

Dear LDANR Community,

The 2018-2019 year brought with it an abundance of change and transition for our agency.

The most notable transition being the number of office staff fluctuations that took place over the course of the year. We have been so fortunate to have a number of unique perspectives and expertise over the past year, but we understand the challenges that come with an inconsistent staff. I want to thank our program families, staff, and volunteers for their patience and understanding as we transitioned through this period of change.

These changes, however, encouraged us to review and revise our internal agency processes and procedures, allowing us to achieve more consistency and efficiencies in the work that we do, and be better prepared for these changes in the future. I want to thank the LDANR office staff and Board of Directors for their input into policy, process, and procedure revisions, and their commitment to continually growing and improving our agency.

The LDANR has also been making progress towards achieving program sustainability through new fundraising efforts, summarized later in this report. These additional funds will help us to maintain our current programs, while keeping fees low for families. Thank you to everyone who has participated, volunteered, supported, or donated to our fundraising events over the year,

and we hope you will choose to be involved again this upcoming year.

While we continue to work towards program sustainability, in the coming year, we are excited to also continue expanding our program offerings, specifically with the JUMP Math, one-to-one numeracy support program thanks to the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Lastly, in the coming year we hope to increase awareness and understanding of learning disabilities in community, while simultaneously increasing visibility of the LDANR in Niagara and addressing misconceptions around what our agency does. It is our hope that increased awareness and working towards a common understanding of a learning disability will help to remove the stigma associated with the term 'learning disability' and will encourage those with learning disabilities to feel empowered.

Thank you to all of our supporters – funders, sponsors, donors, volunteers, staff, community partners – who continue to help us to achieve our mission. We hope you will continue with us on our journey as we expand our services to meet the needs of the Niagara community.

*Samantha Sendzik, MA  
Executive Director*



## LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF NIAGARA REGION

Statement of Revenues and Expenses for the year ended March 31, 2019

	2019	2018
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Operating revenue (schedule 1)	\$ 40,523	\$ 36,922
Grant revenue (schedule 2)	187,730	217,015
Fundraising income (schedule 3)	31,228	21,138
Interest	1,238	77
Donations	14,420	12,478
Sponsorships	6,500	2,500
<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>281,639</b>	<b>290,130</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Accounting and bookkeeping	9,353	10,588
Bank charges and interest	1,861	1,838
Fixed asset purchases (note 3)	11,703	-
Fundraising expenses	4,068	3,992
Insurance	1,411	1,359
Memberships	229	253
Office supplies	1,346	1,253
Payroll fees	1,384	813
Permits and rental fees	3,859	3,053
Photocopying expenses	2,695	3,122
Professional development	2,947	666
Program supplies	14,243	14,277
Public awareness and advertising	199	520
Rent	9,090	9,000
Salaries and benefits	231,889	245,967
Staff and board events	1,879	875
Telephone and internet	1,787	1,888
Travel	557	1,326
Website and computer costs	432	318
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>300,932</b>	<b>301,108</b>
<b>DEFICIENCY OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>\$ (19,293)</b>	<b>\$ (10,978)</b>

## Fundraising

In order to maintain the LDANR's current program offerings, we have been working on securing additional funds through various fundraising initiatives to keep program fees low for families. One way we have done this is through applying for a Bingo permit with the City of St. Catharines, for which we were successful. These funds, coupled with the funds brought in through our Bingo permit with the City of Niagara Falls, help to offset the costs relayed on to families. To receive these funds, however, the LDANR must send two trained volunteers to each of our assigned Bingo time slots. If you, or anyone you know, has a couple hours per month to volunteer their time to a charity, we are constantly seeking Bingo volunteers. Anyone interested can email [info@Ldaniagara.org](mailto:info@Ldaniagara.org)



*Loads of fun out on the green at the LDANR's Golf Tournament Fundraiser!*

During the 2018-2019 year, the LDANR also held three major fundraising events – a Golf Tournament, a Trivia Night, and an event titled 'Walk with Me for LD' – in hopes of building a foundation to continue these events for years to come. While all three were successful in bringing in funds, they did not help us in reaching our fundraising goal. We have decided that, going forward, we will focus our efforts on two main fundraisers – our trivia night and golf tournament fundraisers, while still holding smaller-scale fundraisers throughout the year.

You can support the LDANR's fundraising events by participating, sponsoring, donating, or helping to spread the word. Every little bit helps!

## Appreciation Event

Additional to our fundraising events, the LDANR also holds an Annual Appreciation Event to recognize our volunteers, staff, funders, and community partners. At this event, we announced the recipients of our annual awards – Volunteer of the Year, Instructor of the Year, and Outstanding Contributor.

### ***Volunteer of the Year – Steve Karnay***

Steve has been a Board member with the LDANR for a 4 years, and supports the LDANR in a number of ways – most notably his work spearheading the LDANR’s golf tournament fundraiser. Throughout his involvement, he has remained incredibly supportive of our agency and a strong advocate for the organization. We have been so fortunate to have him as part of our team. Thank you, Steve!

### ***Instructor of the Year – Samantha Dudley***

Samantha was a program staff for the LDANR’s S.L.A.M. Camp during the summer of 2018 and 2019, as well as during the year for the Reading Rocks program. Samantha has done a terrific job of overseeing her program sites, managing, guiding and supporting the other program staff and volunteers and meeting the needs of each child. Thank you, Sam!

### ***Outstanding Contributor Award – Brock University***

Brock University was the recipient of our Outstanding Contributor Award for 2018-2019. Brock University has supported the LDANR since its inception with providing expertise in the area of learning disabilities, research students to aid with data collection and program evaluation, promotion of our placement and volunteer opportunities, and space for not only our after-school program, Reading Rocks, but most recently for our summer S.L.A.M. Camp. We are indebted to Brock University for their commitment to the Niagara community and our agency in particular – they are a true example of a community-minded institution. Thank you, Brock University!



*LDANR being presented with a plaque from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) at LDANR’s Annual Appreciation Event.*

*From left to right: St. Catharines MPP Jennie Stevens, LDANR Executive Director Samantha Sendzik, OTF representative Ken Burden.*

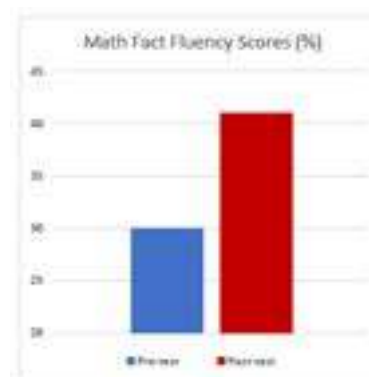
The LDANR's impact on the community is apparent through the feedback we receive from program parents, staff, volunteers, as well as the children. Testimonials found throughout this report highlight the purpose of the work that we do, and motivate us to ensure we are able to continue offering affordable, direct-impact programming to individuals with learning differences in Niagara. Revenue from funders, donors, sponsors, fundraisers, and minimal program fees allow us to continue providing these meaningful experiences to families throughout the community.



*“My son has improved 5 reading levels at school and his teacher is also impressed! We have gone from tears at homework time to his near complete independence. What used to take him 3 days of struggles he now completes on one morning of the weekend before we start the day! **The activities that he is engaged in truly inspire him. His tutor has gone to the effort of discussing his interests and tailoring the lessons according to his tastes.** This program is such a valuable asset to our community. I also believe the tutors' passion and commitment are reflected in the relationship they build with the students which is essential to the learning process.”*

-- Reading Rocks Parent, Winter 2019

The LDANR collects pre and post-test data from each program. Evaluating our programs helps us to ensure the efficacy of our programs. Data analysis of LDANR's pre and post assessments continue to illustrate the gains that are made throughout each program. The demonstrated success of these programs is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff and volunteers, as well as the participants themselves!



Data from S.M.A.R.T. Math program, Winter 2019



# Reading Rocks

Grades 2 – 10

Reading Rocks is a one-on-one literacy program for children in grades 2 – 10 who are behind in their reading due to a diagnosed or suspected learning disability. Through this program, children are matched up with a trained literacy tutor who adapts a workstation and literacy program according to the child's needs in the areas of phonics, sight words, and fluency. This program is designed to support children with reading disabilities develop their reading skills, self-esteem and motivation through fun, hands-on games and activities.

Offered in St. Catharines, Welland and Beamsville.



“My child has better word recognition and better fluency skills. This is important because she is modified to be working two grades lower than their friends at school and she really wants to catch up! I like how they recognized that she needed to move around to learn better, **so they started spelling with gymnastics.** I thought that was great!”

-- Reading Rocks Parent, Fall 2018

# Let's R.E.A.D

*Read, Explore And Discover*

Grades 2 – 4

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Let's R.E.A.D. is a small-group literacy support program designed to support children with a diagnosed or suspected learning disability. While participating in Let's R.E.A.D., children work on increasing their reading skills, self-esteem, and motivation through hands-on and engaging activities. Children work in small groups at workstations and received some one-to-one instruction in the area of their greatest need.



Offered in Beamsville (Wise Guys), Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, and Port

"[My Son's] first day I fought with him to go, the staff are so patient with the kids he had his fit and then was fine for the rest of the class. He is participating more with the games and feels included. **At school he is more confident in answering questions and is trying more.** He is still uneasy about silent reading time but on a better note he actually told me he wasn't comfortable with it, whereas before he wouldn't have said anything. I'm so very proud of him, he has come a long way this year and part of that is because of this great program. Thank you" - *Let's READ Parent, Winter 2019*



## Reading Rocks Jr.

Kindergarten – Grade 1

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Reading Rocks Junior is an early literacy intervention 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. Literacy activities are hands-on and engaging. The goal of this program is to provide support early before the child falls far behind in their reading.

Offered in St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, and Fonthill.

"[My Son] really enjoyed his evenings at Reading Rocks Jr. It was such a positive experience for him. **Last week he was so proud to say that he could read.** This was very significant for him because he is having such a difficult time in school. Thank you for believing in him and helping him to achieve his goal!" -- *Reading Rocks Jr. Parent, Winter 2019*

# B.E.S.T.

*Better Emotional and Social Times*

Grades 3 – 5

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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.

“B.E.S.T is an excellent program! **Very positive and encouraging atmosphere.** This is extremely important to offer for all kids who want to learn to be good friends”

*-- B.E.S.T. Parent, Spring 2018*



# S.L.A.M.

*Summer, Learning, Achievement & More!*

Ages 6 – 10

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S.L.A.M. is designed to support children with learning disabilities during the summer months. Children spend time working on their literacy skills and enjoy many recreational activities (crafts, games, sports, swimming, etc.) all while working on their self-advocacy, self-regulation and social skills. Children work and play in a friendly, supportive environment with low adult-child ratios. *Summer programs can be fun AND educational!*

Offered in St. Catharines, Welland and Niagara Falls.

“S.L.A.M is such an amazing program! My son loves SLAM and it’s the only camp he wants to attend this summer which is such a blessing since he needs this program and it helps him so much. The instructors have been so kind, supportive and engaging. I am so thankful this program is available.”

*– S.L.A.M. Parent, Summer 2018*





## S.M.A.R.T.

*Supporting Math Anxiety and Resilience Together*

Grades 2 – 3 (offered for Grades 4 – 6 in Winter and Spring, 2019)

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S.M.A.R.T. is a small-group numeracy support program designed to support children with a diagnosed or suspected math disability (dyscalculia). While participating in *S.M.A.R.T.*, children work on increasing their numeracy skills, self-esteem, and motivation through hands-on and engaging activities. Children work in small groups at workstations and receive some one-on-one instruction in the area of their greatest need. This pilot project was funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, while a Spring 2018 offering was sponsored by the Ontario Power Generation and Rotary Club of St. Catharines.

“Before starting in the SMART Math program, our son had a strong dislike for math, mostly due to his lack of confidence with math. He would easily become frustrated with the simplest of equations. Since he has been enrolled in SMART, **we have noticed less anxiety and frustration with math.** When answering questions, he is much more confident and struggles less.”

-- SMART Parent, Spring 2018



## H.O.P.E.

Helping Others Parent Effectively

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Formerly offered through Niagara Region, H.O.P.E. will continue to be offered through LDANR. H.O.P.E is a support program for caregivers of children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. The group meets monthly on a variety of topics related to ADHD.

Offered in St. Catharines, supported by the Church of the Good Shepherd.

For more program information, visit our website at [www.LDANiagara.org](http://www.LDANiagara.org)



# Thank you to our Staff and Volunteers

## Program Volunteers

Sagar Aggarwal  
Ayya Al-Qadomi  
Camryn Alexander  
Jessica Marie Anderson  
Marianna Andrade  
Kloe Arruda  
Chantal Arteau  
Zuha Ather  
Bianca Azzarello  
Danielle Baker  
Daniella Barichello  
Deanna Barrow  
Justine Bourak  
Ally Brennan  
Mari Brint  
Taylor Byrne  
Claudia Campbell  
Evelyn Cardenas  
Angelica Casarella  
Emily Castello  
Hailey Cloutier  
Madison Conn  
Riley Cormier  
Carly Corrigan  
Rebecca Craig  
Marina Crudu  
Oriana Defrancesco-Spiteri  
Gillian Delaire  
Mikayla Depalo  
Brianna Dexter  
Ajita Dixit

Jessie Doerner  
Charlene Doiron  
Sarah Domanico  
Haley Dunbar  
Kaylee Earle  
Laurence Esposito  
Lindsay Fabiani  
Sydney Fischer  
Braylyn Flake-Haviland  
Chelsea Fletcher  
Clare Flynn  
Jeanette Frangi  
Tyler Frangi  
Meri Gagne  
Ashleigh Gisel  
Emily Glencross  
Robyn Gogan  
Kaila Henderson  
Rachael Hicks  
Keziah Hodgkinson  
James Hooten  
Miranda Jensen  
Karlie Kitzul  
Megan Kostuch  
Brianna Kuchurean  
Emma Kulik  
Vanessa Lamanna  
Katrina Lemare  
Justine Lemaich  
Anthony Loconte  
Ken Lu  
Ismael Macdon  
Kaley Macoretta

Ushna Malik  
Kate Mamo  
Andrea Mancuso  
Paige Mason  
Chelsey Masson  
Katarina Matheissen  
Rebecca Matic  
Vraj Mistry  
Uroog Mohammed  
Simone Moses  
Felicia Muraco  
Holly Nelson  
Alex Okon  
Alessandra Perri  
Lalita Persaud  
Allison Pillwein  
Justin Pleau  
Devon Price  
Lia Pucci  
Natalia Ristic  
Christian Ritossa  
Averie Romano  
Alissa Rorie  
Emma Ross  
Chelsea Russel  
Delaney Ryan  
Omar Sabouny  
Jake Sanchez  
Jessi Rae Schroeder  
Sarah Seburn  
Inderjit Singh  
Holly Smith  
Maninder Sodhi

Emma Solski  
Madeleine Sommerville  
Peyton St. Pierre  
Emily Stewardson  
Calysa Stewart  
Shaantih Sukhai  
Kasia Szeliga  
Lindsay Tait  
Nicole Unger  
Shreya Upadhyaya  
Taylor Vajda  
Esther van Zadelhoff  
Eva Varano  
Alexander Venerus  
Ciara Vujovic  
Kiersten Walsh  
Mary Wasilik  
Andrea Weesjas  
Emily Wendowski  
Ashley Wilkinson  
Erica Yagi  
Yukari Yamamoto  
Julia Zaniol  
Madeline Zoelman

## Event Volunteers

Kristi Grant  
Devon Price  
Carley Rossi

## Thank you to our Staff and Volunteers

### Bingo Volunteers

Jane & Nick Casson  
Camille Sneddon  
Emily Moore  
Victoria Parlatore

### H.O.P.E. Volunteers

Lynne Cayen  
Glenda Kerrigan  
Debbie Stock

### Placement Students

Kaila Akershoek  
Brittany Cooke  
Erin Huizinga  
Puja Mahesuria  
Uroog Mohammed  
Camryn Alexander  
Shannon Allum

### Program Staff

Kim Ali  
Amanda Bahnuk  
Madeleine Baylor  
Michelle Beamer  
Justine Burnside  
Angelica Cassarella

Julia Chamberlain  
Lydia Collins  
Autumn Conn  
Korynne Cousineau  
Courtney Danbrook  
Amanda DiFonzo  
Molly Dooreleyers  
Samantha Dudley  
Kelly Dueck  
Katelyn Ferguson  
Abby Flett  
Noor Gill  
Emily Glencross  
Kristen Golia  
Linda Hajrullahu  
Carolynn Hare  
Olivia Holmes  
James Hooten  
Kristina Iaccino  
Lynsay Jopson  
Jonah Kember  
Brigette LeBlanc  
Katrina Lemaire  
Morgan Little  
Angela Smith  
Michael Solanki  
Debbie Stevenson  
Mike Szymanski  
Lindsay Tait  
Calianne Telford



Lend a hand and become an advocate, volunteer, sponsor, donate, facilitate, fundraise, or simply help spread the word!

To Join the LDANR team, visit [www.LDANiagara.org](http://www.LDANiagara.org)  
Volunteer intake forms are available online!

## Thank you to our Funders



**United Way  
Niagara**



Ontario  
Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium  
de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario.  
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario.

THE BRANSCOMBE  
FAMILY  
FOUNDATION



## Thank you to our Sponsors



Thank you to our Supporters



Thank you to our Community Partners





## Thank you to our **Research Team**



The LDANR is grateful for our continued partnership with Brock University's Child and Youth Studies Department and the numerous undergrad and grad students that get involved with the LDANR programs. The research team, led by Dr. John McNamara provides LDANR with undergrad and grad students who collaborate with the LDANR to study the efficacy of the programs to ensure quality programs continue to be implemented year after year.

## Thank you to our **Donors**

Lesley Taggart	Bob Burnett	Brenda Walls	Meri Gagne
Stephanie Farr	John Balasak	Teresa L'Ecuyer	Jayne Morrish
Carrie Shatton	Erwin Boyak	Judith Snider	Milad Assaf
Angelica Machado	Renne Griffith	Lynn Kolochuk	Planet Indie Society
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Billie Wright	Andy Duspara	Benjamin Moore	Shannon Passero Design
Kristi Grant	Doug & Ann Oliver	Bice Woolcott	Fallsview Casino
Alexis DeWolfe	Althea Epp	Sir Winston Churchill School	Pen Financial
Lisa VanderBurgt	William Philips	Rotary Club of St. Catharines	
Kyle Boggio	Sylvia Greene	Rotary Club of Niagara Falls Sunrise	



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

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