



Idanr • Learning Disabilities
Association of Niagara Region

2023-2024

ANNUAL REPORT



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.



2023-2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Director

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Director

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Director

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. Steve Karnay, and Jayne Morrish, two of our long serving members have stepped down from the board and we thank them for all of their support and time over the years. We have welcomed Aishah Sonekan and Debbie Ann Fender to the board this past spring and are excited for their present and future contributions. As a non-profit organization, LDANR can only achieve success with your hard work and dedication.

Of special note, we are very excited to have welcomed Jessica Yaguchi, Ann Ai and Valerie Lozancic to LDANR. Madeline Cipriano and Emily Morrison are currently on maternity leave and we look forward to welcoming them back upon their return.

LDANR is also 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.

The 2023-2024 year hallmarked some exciting initiatives:

- LDANR has fully adopted our new CRM software, Better Impact, for client, staff and volunteer data management.
- LDANR also launched our new website in the Spring of 2024.
- We are happy to have received funding from the Community Services recovery Fund for a cyber security assessment which helped us to determine vulnerabilities and to take measures to address any areas of note.
- LDANR held its most successful Trivia Night to date. It was a fun night for everyone involved and we look forward to continuing this event in 2025.
- We partnered with Niagara Catholic in the fall of 2023 to re-introduce our Let's R.E.A.D. program with great success.
- We continued partnerships with both Niagara Catholic and DSBN in the spring of 2023 and 2024 to offer our TIPS for Post Secondary workshops for high school students.
- We continued to offer our popular Reading Rocks, JUMP Math and S.L.A.M. camp programs.
- Our LD Student Social program was a hit and will be continue to be offered this upcoming year.
- LDANR continues to update policies, procedures and new by-laws 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,

Reflecting on the 2023-2024 year fills me with gratitude for the unwavering support and commitment of our community, and great pride for what our organization has accomplished. This annual report serves as a testament to the impact we've made together.

Our program offerings remained stable, with the addition of new social support opportunities such as the LD Student Social program which we aim to expand in the coming years. We also re-introduced our Let's R.E.A.D. program in partnership with The Niagara Catholic District School Board, enhancing our services to the community.

Thanks to regular funding from United Way Niagara, The Branscombe Family Foundation, The Humeniuk Foundation, and Delta Bingo & Gaming, combined with the dedication of 54 program staff and 150 volunteers, we were able to offer 552 program spots to students living with or suspected to have a Learning Disability. These numbers only tell part of the story, though. I encourage you to review the testimonials throughout this report, which highlight the meaningful differences we continue to make.

Behind the scenes, we have been working diligently to improve our operations, including our cyber-security posture, client onboarding procedure, and data management solutions. For example, at this time last year, we underwent a substantial cyber-security assessment funded by the Government of Canada's Community Services Recovery Fund. This assessment provided us with actionable steps to address security gaps and minimize the risk of rising cyber threats.

You may have also noticed some staffing changes at the office, particularly as we wished Madeline Cipriano and Emily Morrison well during their maternity leave, and welcomed new members - Jessica Yaguchi, Ann Ai, and Valerie Lozancic. We have worked hard to ensure these transitions are as seamless as possible. We truly appreciate your patience as we navigate the challenges of being a small non-profit with limited resources while continuing to offer quality programming.

We look forward to another successful year and hope to see you at a program, fundraising event, or even during a visit to our office to say "hello."

Wishing you a prosperous school year ahead!

Samantha Sendzik-Sinclair
Executive Director

**Samantha
Sendzik-Sinclair**
Executive Director

**Emily Morrison &
Jessica Yaguchi**
Literacy Program
Coordinator

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

Taylor Lloyd
Self-Advocacy Program
Coordinator

Annette Cote
Bookkeeper

Financials

Learning Disabilities Association Of Niagara Region
Statement of Operations
Year Ended March 31, 2024

	2024	2023
Revenues		
Grant revenue (schedule 2)	\$ 219,138	\$ 224,639
Operating revenue (schedule 1)	56,750	57,782
Fundraising income (schedule 3)	40,292	42,667
Donations	12,278	16,707
Interest (Note 4)	6,697	4,463
Program partnerships	5,823	35,169
Sponsorships	3,000	8,300
	<u>343,978</u>	<u>389,727</u>
Expenses		
Salaries and benefits	289,338	301,068
Rent (Note 5)	18,000	18,000
Supplies	14,034	12,514
Accounting and bookkeeping	9,565	10,530
Permits and rental fees	6,164	7,178
Telephone and internet	2,786	2,678
Resources expenses	2,500	2,000
Office supplies	2,251	2,368
Fundraising expenses	1,979	1,836
Staff and board events	1,942	640
Insurance	1,917	1,851
Interest and bank charges	1,458	1,739
Payroll fees	1,386	1,443
Website and computer costs	1,353	116
Memberships	270	249
Travel	236	241
Public awareness and advertising	88	210
Training	-	1,018
Photocopying expenses	-	95
	<u>355,267</u>	<u>365,774</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses from operations	<u>(11,289)</u>	<u>23,953</u>
Other expenses		
Cyber security assessment	17,150	-
Website and computer capital expense	9,448	-
	<u>26,598</u>	<u>-</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	<u>\$ (37,887)</u>	<u>\$ 23,953</u>

Fundraising & Events



Attendees at LDANR's Trivia Night Fundraiser, March 2024

Over the 2023-2024 year, the LDANR also continued to raise money from charitable gaming centres Delta Bingo Niagara Falls and Delta Bingo St. Catharines. We are incredibly grateful to be a recipient of these funds year after year.



LDANR staff Ushna (left) and Emily G (right) at LDANR's Golf Tournament Fundraiser, June 2023

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 2023-2024 year, our fundraising efforts included our beloved Trivia Night fundraiser, our Golf Tournament Fundraiser, a Niagara Ice Dogs Fundraiser, and a Boston Pizza fundraiser. In total, these efforts raised over \$12,000 for our organization. We want to thank everyone who participated in, and supported, these important events.



In May 2023, 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.

Fundraising & Events

Annual Appreciation Dinner



LDANR staff Taylor (right), Jessica (middle) and Madeline (left) at LDANR's Appreciation Event, April 2024

The LDANR was pleased to host our Annual Appreciation Event back in-person in April 2024 to celebrate all we accomplished over the 2023-2024 year.

We were joined by MPP Jennie Stevens to recognize the tremendous efforts of our program volunteers and community partners who make our programs and services possible.

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



Our volunteers in attendance at LDANR's Appreciation Event, April 2024

Fundraising & Events

Annual Appreciation Dinner Award Winners

2023-2024 Instructor of the Year

Erica Simmanivong



Taylor (left) and Erica (right) at the LDANR's Appreciation Event, April 2024

Erica has dedicated her time to a number of LDANR programs since 2022. Erica always made sure that our programs were a safe, inclusive space where the children felt seen, heard, and supported. Beyond her professional capabilities, Erica is a kind, warm, and friendly individual. She forges genuine connections with not only the children she works with but also her colleagues. Thank you for all your contributions to our organization, Erica!

2023-2024 Volunteer of the Year

Robin Kim

Robin's genuine passion for ensuring students with learning disabilities reach their full potential shines through in every aspect of his contributions to our organization. Robin understands the importance of a person-centred approach, consistently striving to build meaningful connections with each student he encounters. His warmth, humour, and approachability make him a natural at working with children and youth. We are immensely grateful for Robin's hard work and dedication to our organization.



Robin accepting his Volunteer of the Year Award

Fundraising & Events

Annual Appreciation Dinner Award Winners

2023-2024 Outstanding Contributor
Meridian Credit Union

Meridian Credit Union has been a supporter of LDANR for a number of years now. In addition to supporting us with our day-to-day banking needs, Meridian is always eager to support our fundraising and community initiatives.

For example, during the 2023-2024 year, Meridian Credit Union sponsored our LDA Parent Conference through their Good Neighbour program, as well as our Trivia Night and Golf Tournament fundraisers through local branch sponsorships.

Not only has Meridian provided financial support to our organization, as well as many other non-profits throughout the region, but what sets them apart is their dedication to volunteerism and giving back to the community.

Meridian strongly encourages their employees to get involved in local community agencies, and one fantastic example of this is our long-time Board member, Brenda Taylor.

Brenda joined our Board of Directors after being involved in a project with our organization through her participation in the Leadership Niagara program, a program that Meridian sponsored Brenda to take part in. Since then, Brenda has been a wonderful advocate for our organization in the community, and has donated countless hours to supporting our organization.

To recognize their philanthropic work within the community and, in particular, with the LDANR, we were thrilled to present Meridian Credit Union with our Outstanding Contributor Award.



LDANR Executive Director, Samantha (left) and Meridian Stevensville Branch Manager, Karrie (right) at the LDANR Appreciation Event, April 2024



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 2023 to March 2024, LDANR offered a total of 110 Reading Rocks program spots thanks to United Way Niagara, with support from the Ontario Power Generation and Kiwanis Club of St. Catharines. 60 of these spots were offered in-person, while 50 of the spots were offered online.



“My daughter now approaches each spelling test at school as an opportunity to practice, and does not feel like a failure when she doesn't pass. She is much more confident, and she is willing to write stories. She was down on herself when she didn't get words right on her tests. Now she is able to focus on what she got right and doing better next time.”

Parent, Reading Rocks, Spring 2023



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 2023 to March 2024, 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 2023, 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 really enjoyed the summer breakdown we received at the end of camp of all the accomplishments and what our son worked on. They understood my son and he feels welcomed and understood. Huge positive impact on our child – we finally found a space and leaders who understand how our son learns, communicates, and reacts. Even though other programs have tried, most don't understand or have the patience to give him the time he may need or tools to support him. LDANR staff and programming does."

Parent, S.L.A.M. Camp, Summer 2023



LD Student Social Grade 6-8

LD Student Social is a small-group program for students who are experiencing secondary characteristics associated with learning difficulties (i.e., low self-esteem) due to a diagnosed, identified, or suspected learning disability. These sessions offer a safe and inclusive space for students with learning disabilities to meet and connect with other students who share similar life experiences as a result of their learning disability. Over the 2023-2024 year, we offered 20 spots thanks to The Humeniuk Foundation.

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 2023 to March 2024, LDANR offered a total of 30 B.E.S.T. program spots thanks to United Way Niagara.



"My child struggles with social interactions and how to react when things don't go her way. She struggles with regulating emotions and it's helping her by giving her coping skills. The program helps build her confidence, it taught my daughter how to regulate her emotions and some ways to be responsible."

Parent, B.E.S.T, Spring 2024

LD Parent Social

Based on feedback received in a parent focus group, in Fall 2023, LDANR introduced a bi-weekly Parent Social program, where parents had the opportunity to connect with other parents whose children had a diagnosed or suspected learning disability. This project was funded by The Humeniuk Foundation.

While we received an influx of registrations, the number of attendees remained low, although those who attended mentioned that they were happy that this support existed. Unfortunately, as a result of poor attendance, the LDANR has decided not to continue this support for the 2024 year, instead offering presentations on highly requested topics.



Programs & Services



Transition Programming

During the 2023-2024 academic year, the LDANR was fortunate to receive a donation from the Kiwanis Club of St. Catharines 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.

With this funding, we were able to offer these programs to 56 students in the Spring of 2024.

Let's R.E.A.D.

In Fall 2023, LDANR partnered with Niagara Catholic District School Board to offer our small-group literacy program, Let's R.E.A.D., to Niagara Catholic students who were in Grades 2-4 and who required additional reading support.

Through this partnership, we were able to offer 40 program spots to Niagara Catholic students.



"Thanks for organizing all of the sites and supporting our team in implementing the program. This is a tremendous intervention for kids, and it was encouraging to see the strategies that the students have developed or strengthened."

Let's READ Program Staff, Fall 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 2023-2024 year, CHAMPS was offered at three St. Catharines locations - Rykert, Manchester and Grantham.

Partnership Programs

Staff & Volunteers



Program Volunteers & Placement Students

Cole Wilson
Michelle Abundo
Mofe Adenuga
Daniela Afonso
Amir Al musawy
Rahat Ali
Arianna Almeida
Erika Anger
Paulomi Ashara
Rita Ayim
Kala Bain
Tritee Basu
Sarah Battrick
Trisha Beam
Jessica Biamonte
Mackenzie Boyes
Isha Brar
Jasmanpreet Brar
Alyssa Breen
Andrea Brennan
Alexa Cassolato
Kelsey Cere
Asifabanu Chauhan
Yasmeen Chehade
Alec Chunta
Samantha Cimolai
Isabella Colitti
Lily Dalton
Allison Delgaty
Regan MacDonald
Mya Dinneen
Maria DiPaola
Paige Donald
Arden Doupe
Lorenzo D'Souza
Raquell Fernando
Paris Fess
Kari Fitoski
Erica Fleming
Alyssa Flynn
Ana Lucina Galindo
Alvarez
Raya Gaudett
Luca Giancola
Elisa Giuliani
Tyler Grant
Taylor Gruber
Akanksha Guleria
Emily Haebe
Ola Hamid
Shayan Heybati
Olivia Hussey
Jillian Janeiro
Emma Kate Jeffery
Emma Kate Jeffery
Katerina Karadimas
Gagandeep Kaur
Inderjit Kaur
Jasmeen Kaur
Lilian Wang

Program Staff

Noor Abdo
Mofe Adenuga
Shae-Lynn Antonides
Olivia Barnes
Julia Becevel
Diane Bishop
Michelle Blanchette
Elizha Caragay
Emma Coffey
Ashika Dhiman
Emily Glencross
Cristina Howarth
Robin Kim
Alyssa Kovacs
Ashley Kovacs
Nathan Lefebvre
Ushna Malik
Francesca
Mangiapane
Nicole Muracco
Kyra Omland
Emily Polley
Chantall Powell
Brielle Reeve
Aleah Sawatzky
Cassandra Siavelis
Maité Simard
Erica Simmanivong -
Elizarraras
Samantha Strayer
Emmy Suparmin
Mackenzie Tiffin

Staff & Volunteers



Program Volunteers & Placement Students Cont'd

Jaspreet Kaur
Kiranjot Kaur
Manpreet Kaur
Rajwinder Kaur
Sumandeep Kaur
Sumanpreet Kaur
Robin Kim
Jonathan Kulikov
Angela Laarakker
ShyAnne Laundry-Hiddink
Joyce Lee
Terri Levitt-Chipman
Mischa Lewis
Roxy Lewis
Sofia Lonardi
Emily Long
Melissa Maney-Worden
Alyssa Manfini
Skyla Martino
Christine Matyas
Caitlin McCarthy
Brooklyn McConnell
Mackenzie McRae
Ashley Mierzwa
Gabrielle Morse
Kendra Moss

Simranjeet Kaur NA
Madeha Nur
Gurleen Padda
Meshwa Patel
Adriana Popovic
Brianna Regan
Shannon Rey
Aaron Rigg-Goldblum
Breanne Rintjema
Marisa Romanyak
Roopneet Roopneet
Ashmen Sandhu
Preet Kaur Sharma
Saniti Sharma
Dheeraj Sidhu
Gurshanpreet Singh
Annabelle Stephens-Beaudoin
Kennedy Szweras
Karlee Tennant
Harleen Thind
Katrina-Ann Thompson
Jonathan Tkach
Roberto Velasquez
Victoria Vella
Angela Ventresca
Nika Vrankic

Luna Wang
Shelby Vollmershausen
Lucinda Whitworth
Amanda Williams
Raquel Williams
Grace Woodrow
Amelia Wroblews
Sophie Motoban
Sophie Pullen
Surbhi Angral
Tabi Sheppard
Taylor Woodford
Ishaan Sachdeva

Tingting Gao
Trisha Beam
Tritee Basu
Valerie Beck Slatter
Vanessa Corman
Victoria Heilbron
Victoria Slykhuis
Victoria Vella
Walker Haight
Wilson Nicolas
Winslet Lo
Amarjeet Kaur NA
Rudorwashe Mataga

Lend a hand! Become an advocate, volunteer, sponsor, donate, fundraise, or simply spread the word!

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

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The right to learn, the power to achieve

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