

NEW FRONTIERS in Literacy

Frontier College at 110

Helping Canadians Reach their Potential since 1899



Literacy.
Learning
for Life.

By Sherry Campbell, President

We're 110 and still going strong helping Canadians improve their literacy to succeed in school, at work and in their communities. We believe, as did our founder, Alfred Fitzpatrick over a century ago, that learners are everywhere and everywhere is a learning place. Today the frontier for literacy has moved from the logging, mining and railway camps of Fitzpatrick's day to include newcomers and at-risk youth in inner city communities, children on remote First Nations reserves and migrant workers on farms.

Today the need to improve literacy levels is greater than ever. The Canadian Council on Learning's 2008 report, *Reading the Future*, indicates that nearly half of all adult Canadians (48 per cent) have low literacy skills and forecasts that number to grow by more than three million, to reach 15 million by 2031. One in six Canadians cannot read the headline of a newspaper. That's millions of Canadians who have trouble with everyday reading and writing requirements for life and work.

Currently, only one per cent to two per cent of the approximately nine million less-literate Canadians of working age currently receive the support they need. The cost and competition for post-secondary education can be a barrier for many seeking to upgrade their skills and that is why UNESCO has recognized the importance of community-based literacy organizations in providing opportunities for individuals to acquire their general educational development (GED) or high-school equivalency, or upgrade their literacy, numeracy and computer skills to improve their academic or employment prospects.

At Frontier College, our emphasis is on working with our 300 community partners to improve the literacy skills of people of all ages across Canada.

These are the changes to strive for in helping people reach their potential at work, in school and in their communities. Frontier College is committed to making every community a place to learn and thrive.