



**Learning
Disabilities
Association
of
Alberta**



LDAA • Learning Disabilities
Association of Alberta

2008 - 2009 Annual Report

Greetings from the LDAA President



It has been an exciting and eventful year at the LDAA. When I was elected in President in May 2008, I felt both apprehensive and eager. Having worked in the helping profession and the business world for more than twenty years, I felt confident that I would have some of the skill sets necessary to provide effective leadership, but knew that I would not be satisfied to look back on my tenure as a time when meetings were held, discussions were had, but little change occurred. Fortunately, the legacy left behind by my predecessors provided abundant opportunities for making real differences and systemic changes in public policy as well as classroom and employment practices.

The LD network of dedicated parents and committed professionals continues to forge relationships with government officials and policy makers to ensure that they are aware of the issues regarding the unique needs of children and adults with learning disabilities. A grass roots campaign also rages on. While we believe it is essential that public policy is put in place to ensure equal rights and access, we also know that what happens in our homes, schools and communities is often at odds with policies, rules and laws. Providing accurate, practical and timely information to the people in the trenches, helps ensure that best practices are implemented in our schools and workplaces.

I am extremely fortunate to be working with such a solid board and dedicated staff. Changes in personnel are often difficult. A settling in period is always required and it is often difficult to step into someone else shoes and to maintain the same momentum, but Kathryn Burke, Dina Hendzel and Gwyneth Turner have made this transition a smooth one. They have not maintained momentum, but have accelerated, working to ensure that the LDAA is a respected non-profit organization that is accountable to its constituents. The Right to Read Initiative, work with Advanced Education's Transitions program, the SharePoint website, LDAA's involvement with the Special Education Review, distribution of the World Summit's White Paper to all Education Ministers across Canada, and the continued partnership with the Chapters, are just some of the ways the LDAA is working towards its established goals of:

1. Raising awareness of LD and ADHD;
2. Strengthening the LD network in Alberta;
3. Raising Funds.

How fortunate I am to be a part of this process. Although it is at times difficult to get excited about a teleconference on a Monday night or about spending a Saturday cloistered in a hotel meeting room, it is rewarding to know that the hours spent do result in real differences for individuals with learning and attention difficulties. I can only hope that we do such a good job, we are not needed any more.

Until then, thank you for being part of the team.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Michele Pentyliuk". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Michele Pentyliuk
LDAA President.

Message from the Executive Director



I am writing this message to you after having been in the role of Executive Director for only a few short months. It is a privilege to serve in this position. The Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta is comprised of dedicated individuals committed to positive change – change necessary to support all individuals with learning disabilities to maximize their potential. At its core, the LDAA is a value driven organization.

I feel fortunate to be stepping into the role of Executive Director at this pivotal point in the history of the LDAA. During 2008-09, the LDAA marked several successes; as an association, it is poised to achieve greater successes in 2009-10 and beyond. The current economic and social environment also places an extra responsibility on the LDAA. As never before in the history of the organization, the work of the LDAA is vitally important. As a province and nation, we are facing one of the most serious economic crises since the Great Depression. Ensuring policy makers are well advised about learning disabilities is even more important now than ever before so that individuals with learning disabilities can be supported to live the best lives possible.

The effectiveness of the provincial body to address systemic policy and systems issues was enabled by the hard work and energy of the Chapters and a large network of volunteers. The Chapters across Alberta have offered an array of quality programming. This year has also marked a resurgence in activity by the Red Deer Chapter; their activities will complement services available in Northern and Southern Alberta through the hard work of the Edmonton and Calgary Chapters respectively.

There were many notable highlights of 2008-09 at the provincial level. The LDAA organized and hosted a successful conference in Red Deer. Several members of the LD Network in Alberta attended the first ever World Summit on Learning Disabilities. This event, held in April 2008, was the first of its kind and led to several partnerships including the opportunity to work with renowned Canadian scholar, Dr. Linda Siegel. Going into 2009-10, a major priority for the LDAA is to continue to refine and make available for use a Reading Readiness Screening Tool which it created in association with Dr. Siegel. The World Summit also led to the development of a Government White Paper which I had the honor of writing. It has been disseminated widely across the country, has been tabled in the Canadian Senate and the Alberta legislature, and was presented at the Alberta stop of the National Strategy on Early Literacy Panel Presentations held in early spring.

The challenge in 2009-10, will be to continue to build on this work and to accelerate important priorities in two key areas – screening and early intervention, and support with managing transition to post secondary education and the workforce.

No person works alone. I am indebted to several individuals who have provided significant support during this period of transition. With apologies that I am unable to thank everyone, I wish to draw attention to a few individuals who have been particularly supportive. The entire LDAA board and particularly Michele Pentyluk have been instrumental in making the move to the role of Executive Director as smooth as possible. Thanks must also be extended to the Executive Directors of the three Chapters. Both William Radvanyi (Trendsetting Services) and Gwyneth Turner deserve accolades for web based and accounting support, respectively. Finally, Dina Hendzel is an angel who simply masquerades as a person. Her quiet dedication and support is very much appreciated.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn Burke". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kathryn Burke, BA (Hon), MA

Executive Director

Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta

2008-09: A Year in Review



Red Deer Conference – A Practical Event!

On November 8th, 2009, the LDAA organized a one day mini-conference in Red Deer entitled “Practically Speaking about Learning Disabilities and Attention Hyperactivity Disorder.” Barbara Coloroso was a captivating keynote speaker, providing practical advice delivered in a very humorous and accessible manner. Over 250 people attended all or some of the sessions which ranged from strategies for dealing with homework, ADHD in the classroom, and navigating the educational system. Participant evaluations of the event were very positive, and the organizing committee was very pleased with the level of interest in this mini-conference.

Spreading the Word about Screening and Early Intervention – Public and Professional Seminars

On November 4-5, 2008, the LDAA organized information sessions for decision makers, parents, researchers and service providers in the greater Edmonton area on the efficacy of screening and early intervention for students at risk for reading difficulties, and the health impact of failing to screen and intervene early. Internationally renowned expert on reading and learning disabilities, Dr. Linda Siegel (University of British Columbia) spoke about longitudinal evaluations that assessed how well phonemic based programs delivered by teachers in classrooms to Kindergarten and Grade 1 students supported those at risk for reading difficulties. Alberta based pediatrician and expert in children’s mental health, Dr. Kristin Morrison, addressed the very real health impacts suffered by children and youth who failed to succeed at school because of either learning disabilities or co-existing conditions like ADHD. These sessions were attended by a wide array of over 150 school administrators, trustees, service providers, teachers, parents and researchers. The public seminars were followed by a forum for invited management in school districts to discuss strategies for implementation of more widely based screening and early intervention.

Perspectives Magazine goes Provincial – Kudos and Thanks to the Calgary Chapter

Over the last several years, the Calgary Chapter has invested considerable efforts into the creation of high quality publications and communication vehicles that serve the vital function of educating the public about learning disabilities. In the last year, the Calgary Chapter commenced publication of a magazine called “Perspectives.” The Calgary Chapter has generously enabled the other Chapters to circulate this publication within their regions. Perspectives is now available throughout the province, produced and published by the Calgary Chapter. The LDAA has stopped publishing its provincial newsletter and instead is contributing articles and material for inclusion in Perspectives magazine. Each issue of Perspectives is customized with an insert for distribution to a particular region. The insert profiles programs and services offered by the Chapters. The generosity of the Calgary Chapter in making this resource available across the province is very much appreciated.

The World Summit

Many members of the LDAA network participated in force at the first ever World Summit on Learning Disabilities that occurred in April 2008 at Lake Louise. The Summit was organized by the Foothills Academy in Calgary and chaired by Brenda Martin. As a result of her major contribution to the field of learning disabilities and stellar effort in organizing the Summit, Brenda was also the recipient of the LDAA’s Outstanding Achievement Award at the November 2008 President’s Luncheon held at the 2008 Red Deer Conference. Delegates to the Summit included 189 experts in education, law, genetic research, psychology and advocacy together with parents and individuals with learning disabilities. Outcomes of the Summit have included a resource guide, documentary on learning disabilities, and government White Paper. The White Paper has been widely distributed across Canada to elected provincial, territorial and federal politicians and has been tabled in Canada’s senate and Alberta’s legislature. The White Paper was prepared by Alberta’s Kathryn Burke of the LDAA.



Right to Read- Screening and Early Intervention

Following quickly on the heels of the Public and Professional Seminars on Screening and Early Intervention, the LDAA established the Right to Read Initiative. This multifaceted initiative is predicated upon the goal that all children in Alberta in Kindergarten and Grade 1 will be screened for reading difficulties. The LDAA has assembled an expert team to create a "Reading Readiness Screening Tool" for administration in Kindergarten and Grade 1. The tool has been piloted, looks promising, and will continue to be refined. It is designed to be administered by teachers to screen children in the early grades for potential reading problems. LDAA is also in the process of preparing a DVD to provide instructions to teachers on the proper use of the Reading Readiness Screening Tool. Dates for seminars in the Calgary region have been set for November 2009. Similar seminars will be held in Central Alberta in 2010, followed by discussion in rural communities in Alberta.

Getting Ready for Post Secondary or the Workplace – Supporting the Transition Process

Though in its infancy, LDAA also commenced a new project in 2008-09 to provide youth with learning disabilities and other co-existing conditions with support in planning their transitions from school to post secondary education or the workplace. This initiative has been significantly supported by Alberta Advanced Education and Technology who have made available a body of resources prepared by the ministry on transitions for students with disabilities. Plans include a new website with resources at www.mytransition.ca, inclusion of sessions on transitions at LDAA conferences, and the delivery of seminars on transitions through the Chapters for youth and parents in communities throughout the province.

Conference 2009 – Edmonton

With a conference theme of Mind, Body and Spirit, the annual conference scheduled for November 19-21, 2009 in Edmonton at the Ramada Hotel and Conference Centre, will provide delegates with a

well rounded and holistic approach to learning disabilities and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The conference committee has been very active in 2008-09, comprised of both Edmonton Chapter and Provincial volunteers and staff. The conference will be particularly valuable for teachers, service providers and parents dealing with teens with expert keynote speakers in this area. Consistent with the conference theme, delegates will also learn about the resiliency of youth with disabilities, and how to foster this quality. The program will certainly appeal to a wide variety of interests.

Doing Daily Business Differently - Taking our Fiduciary Responsibility Seriously

In 2008-09, LDAA also began doing its business differently. After the LDAA received notice that they would no longer be able have office space at the Alberta School for the Deaf, the Provincial office was welcomed by the Edmonton Chapter. The move, and appointment of a new Executive Director, resulted in some serious rethinking about how business should be conducted at the provincial level. The provincial office primarily deals with policy issues and overall strategies of importance to the entire province. The Board also meets by teleconference supplanted by two to three face to face meetings per year. The opinion was that significant efficiencies and reduced expense could be realized by moving to a virtual office. Implementation of the virtual office plan began in February. The LDAA post office mailing address remains the same. Flexible phone systems result in the LDAA office number being call forwarded to the office of the Executive Director during business hours, with messaging after hours. The LDAA has also set up a SharePoint website with appropriate security that serves as a central repository of LDAA files for access by Board Members, Chapter and Committee members from throughout the province. Early evaluation of this plan indicates that it has reduced costs, and has been instrumental in providing volunteers with better access to LDAA records. The Edmonton Chapter has kindly offered to continue to store many of the LDAA physical assets. They have also offered the provincial office access to meeting space as needed. Their support during this period of transition is very much appreciated as the LDAA provincially moves ahead with the concept of a virtual office.

Chapter Reports



Edmonton

In 2008-09, the Edmonton Chapter continued to build upon significant progress it made in the previous year. New board members were added to an already energetic and committed group of parents, service providers, advocates and people with learning disabilities. The board dedicated several hours to board development and strategic planning. The resources of the Chapter were significantly enhanced by a grant from the Wild Rose Foundation, to be expended over a two year period. This grant will supplant the revenues from a Casino fundraiser, an event that was actively supported by a large volunteer contingent. The Chapter was also able to add staff to its complement, thereby extending its hours of operation in being able to speak with members of the public calling the office for support and guidance on all matters related to learning disabilities. The Chapter also made concerted efforts to form partnerships with other organizations like the Tourette's Society of Edmonton to improve programming and support for members.

Some firsts and highlights for the Edmonton Chapter included the following:

- With the support of the Calgary Chapter, collaborated to include inserts into Perspectives magazine to highlight programs and services offered to people in Edmonton and Northern Alberta
- Presented at the Greater Edmonton and Area Teachers Convention
- Held a Disability Tax Credit Seminar in conjunction with Revenue Canada as well as the Tourette's Society of Edmonton
- Actively participated in the Setting the Direction for Special Education review
- Partnered with the provincial LDAA on the Right to Read Initiative
- Partnered with the provincial LDAA and the Alberta Teachers Association to create materials on learning disabilities and teaching strategies for use by teachers
- Completed the initial work on new print and layout for an Edmonton Chapter website

The Edmonton Chapter continues to provide a wide range of programming and support to the public and professionals including:

- 8th Annual Beyond Words Summer Camp
- Parent Workshops
- Assessment Services
- Phone and e-mail support
- Literacy and Learning Day presentation
- E-mail updates and news
- Conference planning for the 2009 Mind Body Spirit Conference to be held in Edmonton on November 19-21, 2009
- Parent Support Group

Contact Information: [The Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta \(Edmonton Chapter\)](#)

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Red Deer

A new office, new grants, new Board members, a new Executive Director and a core of long term highly dedicated staff and volunteers are some of the many wonderful things that are happening in Red Deer. All will combine to make Red Deer a tour-de-force in 2009-10. Here are some of the highlights of an exciting year of growth:

- The Red Deer Chapter has settled into a new office that will be better equipped to address its programming needs.
- Considerable effort was expended in 2008-09 to secure grant funding. These efforts paid off with the Chapter being the recipient of a two-year grant to underwrite the salary of the Executive Director for 2009-2011.
- The Multi-Disciplinary Reading and Writing Program operated during 2008-2009 with more demand than staff to meet the community's needs.
- The Red Deer Chapter has been exemplary in fostering win-win partnerships. They have benefited from the participation of an excellent Red Deer College practicum student to assist with the reading program.

- The Red Deer Chapter has forged an exciting relationship with the Red Deer Public Library to run six Parents & Teachers Film Series hosted by Richard Lavoie, a nationally-known expert on learning disabilities. The Film Series will run every Tuesday evening at the Downtown Library during May and two evenings in June 2009.

Social Competence Programs

Two 1-week Social Competence Day Camps for children ages 7-9 and 10-12 will be offered during the summer. Titled SNAKE – Social Networking And Kinship Experiences camp, these camps offer learning so fun that they'll forget that they're learning.

Social Competence Evening Sessions for Adults is again being planned for the fall. Contact the Red Deer Office for more information.

Multi-Disciplinary Reading and Writing Program

An ongoing program with registrations accepted year round offering a full screening including Tracking Skills Assessment, Reading Placement, and Learning Style Identification. Sessions run for 18 lessons based on two lessons per week.

Parent Support Groups

Parents attending the Parents and Teachers Film Series are also interested in organizing a Parent Support Group beginning this fall. With tentative plans to meet once per month, this group will invite speakers and have access to a full library of resources for persons with learning differences.

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Calgary

- The LDAA-CC was able to meet and exceed its' expectations for 2008 while providing supports, programs and services to over 4,300 families.
- The LDAA-CC had over 38,335 visits to their website and 1,606 calls to the office from individuals seeking information and resources.
- The LDAA-CC was pleased to provide programs, seminars and workshops to over 1,725 participants.
- The 4th Annual Walk the Red Carpet Fundraiser, showcasing 'Once upon a time, The social tales' raised 17,000 for the LDAA-CC's programs and services.
- In 2008 the LDAA-CC launched both the Athletic Coordination Camp and the Career Guidance program.
- 2008 included a complete redesign of Perspectives newsletter, turning it into a provincially distributed magazine with over 13,000 copies distributed.
- Concrete Equities' second annual charity golf tournament raised over \$36,000 for the LDAA-CC this year, while also raising awareness about learning disabilities.

Social Skills

2008 was a very exciting year and the LDAA-CC was able to move forward with a few plans. Five Social Skills programs were offered in

Calgary in 2008. Two programs were for children with external social skills difficulties, Two were for internal social skills difficulties and one was mixed. We once again partnered with Estelle Siebens Community Services, associated with Foothills Academy to run social skills programs, with a total of 79 participants.

Camp Amicus

This summer was the 26th year for Camp Amicus. Camp Amicus 2008 was a huge success with the highest registration numbers to date with 191 campers. The LDAA-CC offered seven camps for children age 8 to 17 with learning disabilities and AD/HD.

The camps provided wonderful opportunities for campers to develop social skills, friendships and self esteem. Camp Amicus again had wonderful campers and staff involved in the program. This year also saw an increase in our returning campers, not only signifying the need for the camp, but also the desire to solidify friendships and understanding of social skills.

Athletic Coordination Camp

2008 brought with it the opportunity for a new day camp program designed specifically for kids with coordination difficulties. The camp used athletic activities and concepts to improve fine and gross motor coordination while teaching the essentials of team building. This camp had 15 participants in its inaugural two-week session.

'Picture this!' Teen Social Skills program

The 2008 'Picture this!' teen social skills program had a spectacular group of teens create the 'Picture this!' film with their acting, writing and directing. They had a great time with costumes, make-up and acting. We were again privileged to have a few 'Picture this!' alumni assist us in creating the film. The premiere of this film will be presented in October 2009.

Career Guidance

Career Guidance is another new program for 2008. It was created to help students discover, create and implement meaningful career goals. Participants are helped to discover their vocational dreams and passions, to fully understand their learning disability, and then design a vocational plan that incorporates their learning needs in the context of their chosen career. Such planning will support students in making more effective transitions. In 2008 the program was taught at 3 high schools across the city with 12 students completing the 8 week program.

Parent & Educator Workshops

Our Calgary parent workshops were well attended with excellent facilitators that presented on issues such as 'Social Skills Reinforcement at Home', 'Medical Supports for AD/HD', 'Individual Program Plans' and many other issues pressing to parents.

The Calgary parent workshops are offered in partnership with the Calgary Learning Centre. We also continued to offer the workshops on a regular basis for parents and educators in Medicine Hat and Lethbridge, an initiative we hope to continue into 2009.

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Learning Disabilities in Brief



What are learning disabilities?

Confusion abounds among the public and policy makers about learning disabilities. Persistent and inaccurate myths are that people with learning disabilities are cognitively impaired and unable to learn, or that they reverse letters when writing. These views are inaccurate and fail to reflect the scope and complexity of learning disabilities.

Learning disabilities refer to a number of disorders which can affect how a person acquires, organizes, retains, understands or uses verbal or nonverbal information. People with learning disabilities have average to above average intellect and reasoning and are fully able to learn given the right intervention.

Learning disabilities range in severity and may interfere with the acquisition and use of one or more of the following:

- oral language including listening, speaking and understanding
- reading including word recognition and comprehension
- written language
- mathematics

Individuals with learning disabilities may also have difficulties with organizational and social skills. The impact of learning disabilities changes over the course of a person's life. These changes are affected by a person's strengths and needs and the manner in which they interact with their environment. Learning disabilities are suspected when a person unexpectedly under-achieves at school or can only achieve with unusually high levels of effort and support.

Causes of Learning Disabilities

The precise cause of learning disabilities is unknown. What is known is that learning disabilities are due to genetic and/or neurobiological factors or injury that changes brain functioning in a way that affects one or more of the processes related to learning. For this reason, learning disabilities are lifelong. People do not grow out of learning disabilities though they may develop effective coping strategies.

The existence of learning disabilities is not associated or influenced by a person's gender, ethnicity or socio-economic status. Learning disabilities are not caused by hearing or vision problems, lack of motivation or poor teaching, although these factors may further complicate the challenges faced by individuals with learning disabilities.

Exciting research is occurring focused on the genetic elements of learning disabilities. This and other high quality research on learning disabilities will be instrumental in providing valuable information about how to prevent or minimize its impact.

Conditions which Co-exist with Learning Disabilities

Learning disabilities often co-exist with other conditions including attentional, behavioural and emotional disorders, sensory impairments or other medical conditions. The term atypical brain development (ABD) is being used more frequently as a unifying concept to describe a range of developmental/neurological disorders including learning disabilities and many of the other co-occurring conditions. There is some evidence to suggest that these neurological disorders may have a common etiology; research is continuing to explore this hypothesis.

Secondary Disabilities

Secondary disabilities or conditions occur as a result of primary disabilities. Secondary disabilities can either be prevented or lessened in their intensity with better intervention of the primary condition.

Secondary disabilities are common among people with learning disabilities – particularly in circumstances where the learning disabilities have been identified later in life (or not at all) or where there has not been appropriate intervention and support.

When learning disabilities are the precipitating cause of a secondary disability, the type and severity of the latter will vary based on the person's strengths, how they interact with their environment, and the effectiveness of the interventions to address the learning disabilities or the secondary disability. The situation becomes particularly complex if

the individual is also affected by other co-existing conditions. Common secondary disabilities include mental health conditions including depression, substance abuse and addictions, and suicidal ideation which may result in suicide.

Long Term Consequences of Learning Disabilities

The long term consequences of learning disabilities are generally interrelated and can be severe. Individuals with learning disabilities are:

- Less likely to succeed at school.
- Less likely to achieve high literacy levels
- More likely to be involved with criminal activities and the justice system
- More likely to report overall lower mental health
- Less likely to succeed at work
- More likely to be unemployed or earn less
- More likely to be economically disadvantaged or live in poverty

The evidence is compelling that failure to address learning disabilities at the earliest possible stage results in a significant societal cost incurred through increased demands in the health, justice, social services, and social assistance systems. Opportunity costs are also incurred as individuals with learning disabilities are inhibited from maximizing their potential and thereby contributing to society.

Incidence of Learning Disabilities

Conservative estimates of learning disabilities place its incidence at 1 in every 10 people. It is commonly accepted that the incidence rates are much higher with emerging studies consistently citing a level of 1 out of every 5 people. This makes learning disabilities the most common of all disabilities.

The following table compares the incidence rate of learning disabilities to several other disorders.

Incidence of Learning Disabilities Compared to Other Health Issues

Disease, Disability or Disorder	Incidence Rate per 100,000 Population
Autism Spectrum Disorder	400.0
Breast Cancer	130.8
Prostate Cancer	156.0
Learning Disabilities (Low Estimates of Incidence)	10,000.0
Learning Disabilities (High/Emerging Estimates of Incidence)	20,000.0

How Many People in Alberta Have Learning Disabilities?

Based on the common accepted incidence levels of learning disabilities (1 out of every 10 persons), approximately 326,000 individuals are challenged by learning disabilities in Alberta. If the emerging incidence levels of learning disabilities are used, there are about 651,000 Albertans for whom learning disabilities is an issue.

Prevalence of Learning Disabilities in Alberta by Age Group - 2008

Age Group	Age Range	Population	Assumption Regarding Incidence Level of Learning Disabilities	
			Low	High
Preschoolers	0 to 4 years	202,755	20,276	40,551
School Aged	5 to 19 years	666,050	66,605	133,210
Young Labour Force	20 to 24 years	250,110	25,011	50,022
Mature Labour Force	25 to 64 years	1,805,635	180,564	361,127
Retirement	65 and older	331,780	33,178	66,356
Total		3,256,330	325,633	651,266



2008-09 Award Winners



Each year, the Learning Disabilities Association is privileged to adjudicate two important scholarships or bursaries: The Siobhan Isabella Reid Memorial Scholarship and the Mandin Award.

Siobhan Isabella Reid Memorial Scholarship

The scholarship is open to undergraduate or post graduate students enrolled in any faculty at a university in Alberta. During the scholarship year, the applicant must be enrolled in a program which will lead to that individual being able to assist children and adults with learning disability. In order to qualify for the Reid Memorial Scholarship, a student must be enrolled full time at a university in Alberta during the university year in which the scholarship is received. They must have completed two full academic years at either a university or at a junior college at which courses are acceptable by a university as applicable toward a university degree.

The LDAA's award committee considers several factors in determining who will be the award winners. The most important factors include: 1) the applicant's volunteer contributions to the community or campus; 2) their academic achievement; 3) the perception of the potential of the applicant to contribute to LD community through completion of program of study; 4) whether the proposed program of study is meeting needs currently unmet in the province, and 5) the overall consideration of the quality of the applicant.

Many fine submissions were received in consideration of the Reid

Memorial Scholarship. The LDAA exercised its right to name two high quality award recipients. Ms. Ellen Belanger, currently completing a Master of Education Program at the University of Calgary was one of the two recipients of the scholarship in 2008. She was joined in this honor by Mr. Matthew Gibbs, a student completing a Baccalaureate degree at the University of Alberta. The LDAA extends its congratulations and sincere best wishes for the future to both Ms. Belanger and Mr. Gibbs.

Mandin Award

The Mandin Award was established in 1991 in memory of Maurice, Susan, Islay, and Janelle Mandin. Maurice and Susan Mandin were teachers with a sincere interest in children with special needs. Isaly and Janelle, their daughters, were students. The Award has two purposes. The primary one is to provide resources that will have the greatest positive impact for children from age 4-21 within Alberta. The second goal is to encourage those children who receive funds to pursue their educational goals with enthusiasm and confidence.

The Awards Committee considers several factors when determining who will be the Mandin Award Recipient. The Mandin Award is reserved for only those applicants that have disabilities that impact their learning. Mr. Shawn Garbutt, a junior high student presently residing in Calgary, is the 2008 recipient of the Mandin Award. Shawn and his mother Bonnie, made the trip to the Red Deer Conference, and were able to receive the warm welcome and congratulations of the LD community for being the 2008 Mandin Award recipient.



Brenda Martin – 2008 Outstanding Achievement Award Recipient

The LDAA board will, at its discretion, award an individual the association's "Outstanding Achievement Award." The honor is bestowed periodically to a person, who in the unanimous opinion of the board, has achieved excellence in their volunteer or professional capacity in maximizing the potential of individuals with learning disabilities.

The board was enthusiastic about naming Ms. Brenda Martin as the 2008 recipient of the LDAA Outstanding Achievement Award. Brenda Martin is a veritable tour-de-force who has contributed in many different ways to maximizing the potential of people with learning disabilities. Brenda is the parent of an adult child whose life has been affected by learning disabilities. Like many parents, Brenda advocated to get her son the support he needed to help him flourish and become a competent self-actualized adult. Her personal experience motivated her to help others and enhance awareness about learning disabilities. She has been a presence as both a volunteer and then as staff member at Foothills Academy in Calgary since her son's learning issues were diagnosed.

The event that was particularly noteworthy for the LDAA board in considering her as the recipient of the LDAA Outstanding Achievement Award was her role in organizing the first ever World Summit on Learning Disabilities. The World Summit was Brenda's brainchild and she was the

impetus and driving force behind the event. Held on April 13-16, 2008, 189 people from around the world attended the Summit. Delegates included experts in the field of medicine, psychology, education, justice, neurological and genetic research, government, law, advocacy and employment, and parents and individuals with learning disabilities. With the sponsorship of the Foothills Academy and many other donors, a primary objective of the Summit was to create enduring tools for use in enhancing awareness and changing policy about learning disabilities. This goal has been achieved. A resource guide and government White Paper have been created as a result of the Summit, and are now available for use. A television documentary is also being produced which should be available for broadcast in the summer of 2009.

The Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta wishes to express its sincere thanks to Brenda for her commitment and energy in spreading awareness and knowledge about learning disabilities.

Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta

Board 2008-09

Michele Pentyliuk	President	Edmonton
Elayne Harris-Lorenz	Past President	Lloydminster
Kathryn Burke	Vice President (To November 2008)	Edmonton
Bonnie Blankert	Secretary	Calgary
Janice Mills	Treasurer	Edmonton
Sandy Bray	Director	Calgary
Brent Smith	Director	Red Deer
Kelly Lehman	Director	Tofield
Noreen Rude	Ex Officio	Calgary
Rachel O'Brien	Ex Officio	Edmonton
Stracey Smith	Ex Officio	Red Deer
Lorrie Goegan	Vice President, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada and Alberta Delegate to the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada	Calgary

Officials 2008-09

Kathryn Burke	Executive Director	Edmonton
Dina Hendzel	Communications Director	Edmonton
Gwyneth Turner	Accounting	Edmonton
William Radvanyi, Trendsetting Services	Web and Information Technology	Edmonton

Departing Board Member - Janice Mills

Sadly, with the 2009 Annual General Meeting, the LDAA will be saying good bye to Janice Mills — a stalwart volunteer and advocate of individuals with learning disabilities. In her role as Student Support Specialist at NorQuest College in Edmonton, Janice works with students with a wide range of disabilities, including learning challenges, to obtain the accommodations they need for successful post secondary education. She has a broad and practical understanding of learning disabilities, particularly at the post secondary level. Janice has served on the Board for six years, and is leaving as LDAA by-laws limit the length of a consecutive term of office to six years. However, while she is leaving the board, she has already expressed her willingness to continue in other volunteer roles, including serving on the LDAA awards committee. Janice has left a very positive mark on the LDAA. She has contributed in many different ways including serving for multiple terms as the Association's treasurer and as a conference committee volunteer, search and selection committee member, and other volunteer capacities. Her calm demeanor, extensive knowledge base, and dependability will be sorely missed by the Board and its officials. The LDAA network is united in sending its appreciation to Janice for her major commitment over the years.

Our Thanks ...

Alberta Education:

The operation of the Learning Disabilities Association is supported by a generous Education Support Grant for Non-Profit Educational Organizations provided by Alberta Education. We are grateful for their continuing support of our goals.

Randy Anderson Learning Foundation/Edmonton Community Foundation:

The Randy Anderson Learning Foundation, an organization dedicated to supporting people with learning disabilities, has provided a generous grant to the LDAA to support its ongoing organization. The sincere thanks of the LDAA go to Larry Anderson for his history of philanthropy and support in memory of his brother, Randy Anderson.



Edmonton Public School Board:

The LDAA wishes to support its sincere thanks for the donation of Edmonton Public School Board in support of the November 2008 seminars on screening and early intervention.

The University of Alberta – Faculty of Education:

The LDAA wishes to acknowledge and thank the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta for its material support of the November 2008 screening and early intervention seminars.

Conference Sponsors:

Special thanks to the following groups that provided sponsorship to the Red Deer Conference: “Practically Speaking about Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.”



Volunteers and Active Supporters:

The work of the LDAA in 2008-09 was supported by the following core group of individuals:

Michele Pentyliuk
Brent Smith
Noreen Rude
Judy Craig
Linda Siegel
Jodine Chase
Julie Stirling
Dina Hendzel
William Radvanyi

Kristin Morrison
Serena Ma
Bonnie Blankert
Sandy Bray
Stracey Smith
Joanne Heckbert
Veronica Smith
Susan Vinci
Bev Oscar

Phyllis Carlstrom
Paul Reid
Evalee Findlay
Raymond Yee
Janice Mills
Kelly Lehman
Rachel O'Brien
Sylvia Hannah
Heather Reimer

Carrie Sandboe
Marty Hornstein
John Wojcicki
Rose Prefontaine
Gwyneth Turner
Kathryn Burke

AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of
Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta

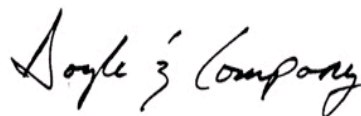
We have audited the statement of financial position of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta as at March 31, 2009 and the statements of operations and changes in fund balances and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Association's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In common with many non-profit organizations, the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta derives some of its revenue from donations, the completeness of which is not susceptible of satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, our verification was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta and we were not able to determine whether adjustments might be necessary to cash, revenues and excess of revenue over expenditures.

In our opinion, except for the effect of adjustments, if any, which we may have determined to be necessary had we been able to satisfy ourselves concerning the completeness of the donations referred to in the preceding paragraph, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Association as at March 31, 2009 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Edmonton, Alberta
May 14, 2009



Chartered Accountants

**LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES
AS AT MARCH 31, 2009**

	Operating Fund		Mandarin Fund		Endowment Fund	
	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
REVENUE						
Alberta Education Grant	70,000	67,000	-	-	-	-
Membership fees	5,338	3,880	-	-	-	-
Donations	2,180	18,087	-	-	-	-
Interest	3,892	3,912	952	952	1,043	1,043
Casino income	82,528	-	-	-	-	-
Conference income	35,486	17,095	-	-	-	-
Other	734	4,548	-	-	-	-
Donation carried forward to 2007/2008	-	4,000	-	-	-	-
Donation carried forward to 2008/2009	10,000	(10,000)	-	-	-	-
Grant carried forward to 2009/2010	(29,150)	-	-	-	-	-
Casino income carried forward to 2007/2008	-	71,439	-	-	-	-
Casino income carried forward to 2008/2009	24,497	(24,497)	-	-	-	-
Casino income carried forward to 2009/2010	(84,752)	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>120,753</u>	<u>155,464</u>	<u>952</u>	<u>952</u>	<u>1,043</u>	<u>1,043</u>
EXPENDITURES						
Office (Schedule 1)	7,541	9,163	-	-	-	-
Executive Director	53,699	38,585	-	-	-	-
Communications Director	6,163	29,082	-	-	-	-
Bookkeeping fees	3,451	-	-	-	-	-
Awards	-	-	420	400	-	-
Dues and subscriptions	520	415	-	-	-	-
Donation - Calgary chapter	-	1,500	-	-	-	-
Conference and meetings (Schedule 1)	7,246	11,677	-	-	-	-
Annual conference expenses	37,371	-	-	-	-	-
LDA Canada membership fees	2,560	1,904	-	-	-	-
Advertising and marketing	4,395	7,121	-	-	-	-
Audit and accounting	2,696	3,904	-	-	-	-
Legal fund	-	-	-	800	-	-
Insurance	3,920	1,463	-	-	-	-
Public Awareness	-	625	-	-	-	-
Programs and activities (Schedule 1)	2,767	2,722	-	-	-	-
Website	920	28,744	-	-	-	-
Rent	1,034	-	-	-	-	-
Bank charges and interest	483	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>134,766</u>	<u>136,905</u>	<u>420</u>	<u>1,200</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES FOR THE YEAR	(14,013)	18,559	532	(248)	1,043	1,043
FUND BALANCES, Beginning of Year	212,079	193,520	19,671	19,919	23,888	22,845
FUND BALANCES, End of Year	<u>198,066</u>	<u>212,079</u>	<u>20,203</u>	<u>19,671</u>	<u>24,931</u>	<u>23,888</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

**LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2009**

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Grants and other income received	182,182	131,890
Cash paid to suppliers	<u>(136,364)</u>	<u>(129,784)</u>
	<u>45,818</u>	<u>2,106</u>
 CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Interest received on investments	5,887	5,907
Decrease (increase) in investments	<u>23,201</u>	<u>(5,001)</u>
	<u>29,088</u>	<u>906</u>
 Net increase in cash	74,906	3,012
Cash - beginning of year	<u>146,056</u>	<u>143,044</u>
 Cash - end of year	<u><u>220,962</u></u>	<u><u>146,056</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
MARCH 31, 2009

1. GENERAL

The Association is organized under the Alberta Societies Act. The basic aims of the Association are to provide support and counsel for learning disabled persons and their families and to secure the provision of services, which will enable these persons to realize their potential.

The financial statements present the assets, liabilities, revenues and expenditures of the provincial association only. The operations and affairs of individual chapters throughout the province are controlled and reported independently.

2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a) Revenue Recognition

The Association follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions to the general fund. Restricted contributions to the general fund are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions to the general fund and all contributions to the Mandin Fund are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

b) Capital Assets

At acquisition, the cost of purchased capital assets is recorded as an expenditure. Capital assets are not reported in the balance sheet and no amortization is recorded.

c) Investments

Investments are recorded at cost.

d) Financial Instruments

The Association's financial instruments consist of cash, accounts receivable, investments and accounts payable and accruals. It is management's opinion that the Association is not exposed to significant interest, currency or credit risk arising from these financial instruments. Unless otherwise noted, the fair value of these financial instruments approximates their carrying values.

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
MARCH 31, 2009

2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (continued)

e) Measurement Uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

3. INVESTMENTS

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
Bonds, at cost	<u>128,258</u>	<u>151,459</u>
Quoted market value at March 31, 2009	<u>132,622</u>	<u>152,952</u>

The investments consist various bonds with a rate of return between 3.55% and 6.0%. These bonds can be sold at any time. The income from these bonds is being reinvested as paid.

4. ENDOWMENT FUND

The Endowment fund was established in 1988 for the purpose of funding operating expenses and special projects as approved by the board. The fund balance is comprised of specific donations, which are held and invested for a minimum period of ten years, 10% of net fundraising income appropriated and transferred from the general fund prior to 1993, and accumulated investment income to date. Earned investment income only, is available for the general operations of the Association.

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
Externally restricted net assets		
- Accumulated donations	6,767	6,767
- Accumulated appropriations of fundraising income	<u>8,741</u>	<u>8,741</u>
	<u>15,508</u>	<u>15,508</u>
Internally restricted net assets		
- Accumulated investment income	<u>9,423</u>	<u>8,380</u>
Total fund assets	<u>24,931</u>	<u>23,888</u>

5. MANDIN MEMORIAL EDUCATION FUND

The Mandin Memorial Education fund was established in 1993 by a donation from the Mandin family. The original gift and any subsequent donations received are to remain invested while the investment income is to be used to provide resources for children in Alberta with learning challenges. The details of this fund are as follows:

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
Externally restricted net assets		
- accumulated donations	14,281	14,281
Internally restricted net assets		
- accumulated investment income net of expenditures	<u>5,922</u>	<u>5,390</u>
Total fund net assets	<u>20,203</u>	<u>19,671</u>

6. APPROVAL BY THE BOARD

The Board of Directors approved these financial statements.

**LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA
SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2009**

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
OFFICE		
Supplies (office and printing)	2,235	2,470
Telephone, utilities and cleaning	4,103	4,143
Mileage and parking	562	521
Office relocation	-	865
Postage and courier charges	<u>641</u>	<u>1,164</u>
	<u>7,541</u>	<u>9,163</u>
 CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS		
Provincial conferences and meetings	2,594	4,398
Executive and committee meetings	2,777	4,507
Conference – board members	-	1,698
Annual retreat	<u>1,875</u>	<u>1,074</u>
	<u>7,246</u>	<u>11,667</u>
 PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES		
Outreach Program	2,245	109
Employee Training	21	684
Volunteer Appreciation	-	440
Newsletter	<u>501</u>	<u>1,489</u>
	<u>2,767</u>	<u>2,722</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Our Mission

To support people with learning disabilities achieve their full potential.

Who We Are

We are a not-for-profit charitable association of parents and professionals linked to a network of Chapters in Calgary, Red Deer, and Edmonton.

What We Believe

Every person is unique and this must be respected and reflected in public policy.
Unwrapping the gifts of people with learning disabilities unlocks their full potential.
People with learning disabilities are a vast untapped human resource.
Early intervention and appropriate accommodation matter to everyone. The consequence of LD not mattering is community wide and impacts resources in employment, mental health, justice, health, and other human services.
The loss of human potential is immeasurable.

Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta

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