



## **Council of the Federation Announces Literacy Award Winners for 2008**

**QUÉBEC CITY, July 17, 2008** – Provincial and territorial Premiers today announced the recipients of the fourth annual Council of the Federation Literacy Award. The award recognizes outstanding achievement and excellence in literacy. It is presented to educators, volunteers, learners, community organizations, non-governmental organizations and businesses.

The recipients of the 2008 Council of the Federation Literacy Award are:

**Daniel Haines** – Alberta  
**Janice Douglas** – British Columbia  
**Anita Martens** – Manitoba  
**Greg Drewett** – New Brunswick  
**Rinette Bouchard** – New Brunswick  
**Lillian Moores** – Newfoundland and Labrador  
**Mardy Voudrach** – Northwest Territories  
**Harris J. Hayne** – Nova Scotia  
**Niutaq Cultural Institute** – Nunavut  
**Alfred Jean-Baptiste** – Ontario  
**PEI Literacy Alliance** – Prince Edward Island  
**Autumn Lane Rice** – Québec  
**Irene Jacques** – Saskatchewan  
**Gordon Hardie** – Yukon

Premiers recognize that literacy is a key element enabling labour force participation, which in turn contributes to productivity and the country's economic well-being. In 2004, Premiers created this award in recognition of the importance of literacy as an essential building block to a vibrant society and economy.

"I am pleased to congratulate the recipients of this year's Council of the Federation Literacy Award," said Jean Charest, Premier of Québec and incoming Chair of the Council of the Federation. "On behalf of all Premiers, I applaud the exceptional efforts and outstanding contributions of these individuals and organizations. Their hard work and accomplishments are worthy of recognition by Canadians across the country."

Each award recipient receives a certificate, signed by their Premier, as well as a Council of the Federation Literacy Award medallion.

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The Council of the Federation comprises all thirteen provincial and territorial Premiers. It enables Premiers to work collaboratively to strengthen the Canadian federation by fostering a constructive relationship among the provinces and territories and with the federal government.

To learn more, visit [www.councilofthefederation.ca](http://www.councilofthefederation.ca).

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**Biographical Information**  
**2008 Council of the Federation Literacy Award Recipients**

**Daniel Haines – Alberta**

Daniel Haines is a student with Project Adult Literacy Society (PALS). While continuing to improve his own reading and writing skills with a one-on-one tutor, Daniel has gained immense confidence and became a strong advocate for adult literacy. He speaks openly about the stress he felt hiding his literacy difficulties in the workforce for 30 years. In 2003, he became involved in the Students for Students Steering Committee at PALS, and in 2004, was nominated as a Student Director on the board of Literacy Alberta. He is currently Alberta's Learner Representative in the Movement for Canadian Literacy, sits on three literacy boards, and has attended focus groups in Ottawa with the National Libraries Summit. This past year, Daniel organized a focus group in Edmonton as part of the national survey on Literacy and Health. He was also part of the first adult learner group to speak to a Senate committee. He is well-respected as a leader and mentor among his peers, and is known for his hard work, humor and passion for literacy.

**Janice Douglas – British Columbia**

Janice Douglas began her career in literacy as a children's librarian in 1967. She is a tireless leader in the library community and has contributed to the development of literacy for all. Janice was a founding board member and former chair of Word-on-the-Street (a national literacy festival), a founding partner for Family Literacy Week in British Columbia, and a supporter of the introduction of Mother Goose programming around Vancouver. While her work has had a positive influence on children's reading activity in Vancouver, Janice has not neglected adults. She developed One Book One Vancouver, an adult literacy program designed to get the whole city reading the same book. She also created Man in the Moon, a literacy program for male caregivers and their children. With 40 years experience behind her, Janice continues to be a literacy champion in her current role as Staff Liaison on the Community Relations Committee at the Vancouver Public Library.

**Anita Martens – Manitoba**

Anita Martens arrived in Canada in the late seventies filled with hopes of a bright future but soon found herself in a difficult situation. She was a single mother with three small children and limited English skills. Years later, Anita spent a few months in a literacy course and began to dream of continuing her education. Her confidence grew as her skills improved. She continues to work hard to improve her English and complete her Grade 12. Her goal is to attend college to become a health care unit clerk. Anita is generous and always happy to assist others. She volunteers once a week at the local Health Sciences Centre, and is a member of the Learner Speakers' Bureau and the Student Advisory Group. In April 2008, she was a member of the adult learner caucus at the Council of Ministers of Education Pan-Canadian Literacy Forum. Her motto, "I decided to get better instead of bitter," perfectly summarizes her quest to overcome barriers of language, education, and personal circumstance in order to better herself.

### **Greg Drewett – New Brunswick**

Greg Drewett knew he needed to improve his literacy skills when, at 32, he lost his job as a plumber's assistant because he did not have the necessary certification. With severe dyslexia, he had dropped out of school in Grade 9. At first, it seemed this would prevent him from getting his General Educational Development (GED). However, in the past two years, Greg has benefited from an amazing level of support from volunteer tutoring, a community-based literacy class and a special class at the community college. With a community fund-raiser to help with living expenses, dedication, and much hard work, Greg was able to pass the GED exams this spring. He now expects to go back to work for his former employer and start his apprenticeship at the New Brunswick Community College.

### **Rinette Bouchard – New Brunswick**

While still a young girl, Rinette Bouchard had to leave school to take care of her ill parents. She was a model student, but circumstances prevented her from returning to school. Several years passed, and Rinette still dreamed of earning her diploma, improving her skills and obtaining a better job. After making the decision to go back to school at the age of 56, nothing could stop her. Rinette completed the three intermediate levels of French and Mathematics in record time. She then worked tirelessly to prepare herself to write the GED exams. Rinette passed all five of her exams on her first try. She was able to apply for the jobs of her choice and returned to the labour market in the field she had always preferred: health.

### **Lillian Moores – Newfoundland and Labrador**

Lillian Moores has been involved with literacy in Newfoundland and Labrador since 1989. Currently she is a board member of Literacy Newfoundland and Labrador and an Adult Basic Education instructor at the College of the North Atlantic in Grand Falls-Windsor. Ms. Moores has been an avid volunteer giving of her personal time to assist learners and communities in responding to literacy needs. She served as President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Laubach Literacy Council for three years and also served a ten-year term as Provincial Training Officer for the province. In this position Ms. Moores represented Newfoundland and Labrador nationally on a literacy board. Ms. Moores received the Volunteer of the Year Award for Laubach Literacy in 2006 and the Canada Post Educator Award in 2007.

### **Mardy Voudrach – Northwest Territories**

As an infant, Mardy Voudrach was stricken with meningitis. The disease impeded Mardy's ability to learn and left her with a partially paralyzed hand and tongue. Despite her tragic start in life, Mardy has demonstrated an exemplary level of courage and determination in advancing her literacy and her life. Prior to enrolling in a one-on-one tutoring program in Tuktoyaktuk, she could not read or write, and spoke very little. In the past year, she has worked very hard on her literacy studies while continuing physical training for her hand and tongue. Mardy can now speak clearly, do basic math, read and write texts, use a computer, and operate a digital camera. Since improving her literacy skills, Mardy has started her first job. Her employer describes her as "a great asset to our workplace," while highlighting her "very positive work ethic."

### **Harris J. Hayne – Nova Scotia**

After more than 20 years, Harris J. Hayne's decision to return to learning was not an easy one. He dreamed of becoming a power engineer but learned from the Antigonish County Adult Learning Association (ACALA) that he read at a seventh-grade level. By studying on his own throughout the summer, he was able to improve his reading to a tenth-grade level. He continued to work with the ACALA and, in June 2007, acquired his Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults. Harris showed determination, a strong work ethic, and provided leadership to his fellow students. He took time out of his schedule to talk to and motivate those around him. One year after his decision to return to learning, Harris is on the honour roll as a power engineering student at Nova Scotia Community College.

### **The Niutaq Cultural Institute – Nunavut**

The Niutaq Cultural Institute is located in Igloodik, Nunavut, and serves the thirteen communities of the Baffin Region. Their goal is to preserve Inuit culture and beliefs. This is done partly through two major projects: traditional knowledge transcribing and wildlife traditional knowledge transcribing. The institute, in collaboration with the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, recently produced a collection of oral histories. *Unikkaaqtuat Qikiqtaniinngaaqtut: Traditional Stories from the Qikiqtani Region, Volume 1: Arctic Bay and Igloodik*, was published in syllabics and translated to English. The Niutaq Cultural Institute plans to publish additional traditional stories in October 2008.

### **Alfred Jean- Baptiste – Ontario**

Alfred Jean-Baptiste is a recognized community leader who has been raising public awareness and understanding of the issue of literacy for nearly 20 years. His leadership and creative approach to adult learning has helped raise the profile of literacy in Toronto and increase accessibility to academic upgrading programs. Alfred joined the Toronto East End Literacy Project (now the Centre for Community Learning & Development) in 1989 as a program coordinator and became Executive Director in 1998. He played a leading role in the development of Toronto's first community-based pathway to higher education for adult learners and supported the creation of a highly-regarded consulting service that raises public awareness of the impact of inaccessible language on people at all literacy levels. Alfred is the author of several books and publications on literacy, equity and participatory research.

### **The PEI Literacy Alliance – Prince Edward Island**

The PEI Literacy Alliance is an umbrella group for organizations with an interest in literacy. Their mission is to "advance literacy for everyone in PEI." In the past two years, they have given away \$16,000 worth of bursaries and scholarships to adult learners. In 2007, they tutored 769 children in their Summer Tutoring Program, completed two health literacy research projects, and raised \$36,000 for literacy projects. Their membership has steadily increased over the years to a total of 29.

**Autumn Lane Rice – Québec**

Autumn Lane Rice lives in Kahnawake. While attending school as a child, she experienced intense periods of rejection and loneliness. This left her with a negative image of schooling in general and prevented her from completing her education. In 2003, she found an ad for a community literacy course and signed up. She now sees the difference this course has made in all aspects of her life. She is more confident, has better interactions with others, can read and write properly, and has improved her working conditions. Through learning, Autumn has overcome obstacles and has profoundly contributed to her personal, social, and working life.

**Irene Jacques – Saskatchewan**

Irene Jacques, an Elder from Standing Buffalo First Nations, has been a strong advocate for Aboriginal literacy since the 1990's and an inspiration to all. As a mother of 10 with many grandchildren and great grandchildren, Irene Jacques, or Eagle Woman in Dakotan, knew from personal experience that literacy and continuing education played a vital role in the involvement and success of Aboriginal people in Canadian society. She first became involved in literacy as an Elder advisor to the Saskatchewan Literacy Network. She has served numerous literacy committees including the Circle of Learning Literacy Benchmarks Advisory Committee, the Justice Literacy Advisory Committee, and the National Aboriginal Literacy Design Committee. Irene is a founding member and the first president of Canada's National Indigenous Literacy Association and a founding member of the Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Network.

**Gordon Hardie – Yukon**

Gordon Hardie dropped out of school without being taught to read and write properly. Since deciding to return to learning using the Wilson Reading Program, Gordon has become increasingly involved in promoting literacy in the Yukon. Gordon is the Adult Learner Representative for the Literacy Action Network – a group of learners that meets twice a year in Ottawa to discuss issues related to being an adult learner in Canada. He is a winner of the Canada Post Award for Adults Learners and sits on the steering committee for the Literacy Gathering in Dawson City in May 2009. He was also declared a Literacy Hero by the Yukon Literacy Coalition. Gordon actively promotes literacy at the grass roots level. He is self-motivated and a determined leader who desires literacy for all Yukoners.