

**Literacy Foundation's 20th anniversary:  
we need your words of hope more than ever**

**Montreal, September 8, 2009**—On the occasion of International Literacy Day, the Literacy Foundation is officially launching its 20th anniversary celebrations. All year long, the Foundation and its spokesperson, Marie-France Bazzo, will be raising public awareness of the problem of illiteracy in Quebec in the hope of putting an end to the loud silence that surrounds it. To that end, an original, fun awareness campaign will be launched in October.

"This anniversary is a chance for us to take stock of the last 20 years. We are proud of what we have accomplished, but there is still much to be done," stated Maryse Perreault, Chief Executive Officer of the Literacy Foundation. "In Quebec, 49% of the labour force, or 2.5 million of our fellow Quebecers, have trouble reading, and one adult in six is completely illiterate. The economic and social impact is huge, and many opinion leaders now acknowledge this."

This situation, combined with the demographic crunch, makes Quebecers' basic training a crucial issue, and a major economic and social challenge. Through this anniversary, the Foundation aims to bring back hope to these hundreds of thousands of individuals.

The support of Marie-France Bazzo, spokesperson for the 20th anniversary, will help raise the profile of the cause. "Through the strength of her arguments and convictions and her straight talking," added Ms Perreault, "Ms Bazzo is well up to bringing new life to the cause in the media and vis-à-vis the public."

**WORDS for sale!**

Designed free of charge by the Bleublancrouge agency, the Foundation's new awareness campaign will have two goals: to raise the Foundation's profile, and to raise funds. And it will do so by selling words! For a few dollars, the Foundation will offer people the chance literally to buy words through a Web site set up for that purpose. With the co-operation of many public figures, including Marie-France Bazzo, Véronique Cloutier, Pierre Karl Péladeau, Normand Brathwaite, Larry Smith, Jean Airoldi, Josée Laviguer, Joël Legendre and many others, the campaign will be seen in print and on the Internet and heard on the radio. From October 4 onward, visit [MotsDépôt.com](http://MotsDépôt.com)!

**20th anniversary partners**

Our thanks to all our partners for their generous contributions and loyal support: Quebec Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sports (MELS), J. Armand Bombardier Foundation, Mouvement des caisses Desjardins, Hydro-Québec, Loto-Québec, Solidarity Fund QFL, Pratt & Whitney, McCain Foundation, CSN, Molson Donations Fund, La Capitale Financial Group, Bleublancrouge, Place Ville Marie, Pop Média and Hebdos Québec. For a complete list of partners, visit [fondationalphabetisation.org/en](http://fondationalphabetisation.org/en).

## **20 years helping adults and children**

Each year, the Foundation gives thousands of illiterate adults the opportunity to return to training through its assistance and referral service, *Info-Alpha*. It also supports, through various initiatives, stakeholders involved in combating illiteracy and promoting adult education and lifelong learning. The Foundation shows its concern with the cycle of transmission of illiteracy, too, by acting preventively vis-à-vis the youngest members of society through the *Gift of Reading*<sup>®</sup> project, which, over the past 10 years, has meant that 195,000 brand new books have been distributed to the same number of underprivileged children in Quebec.

## **Literacy Foundation**

Founded in 1989, the Literacy Foundation is a non-profit organization whose mission is to ensure that everyone—adults and children—has access to reading and writing. To help the Foundation, make an online donation at [fondationalphabetisation.org/en](http://fondationalphabetisation.org/en).

- 30 -

### Source:

Awareness Department

Literacy Foundation

[fondationalphabetisation.org/en](http://fondationalphabetisation.org/en)

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