



Cooperating in building the future

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

International Literacy Day Promoting reading and writing . . . to build tomorrow's Quebec!

Montreal, September 8, 2014 – On the occasion of International Literacy Day, the Literacy Foundation—celebrating its 25th anniversary this year—points out that reading and writing are key to Quebecers' ability to adjust to the requirements of the Quebec of today and tomorrow. To underscore the importance of lifelong personal development, the Foundation is taking the opportunity afforded by International Literacy Day to present five *I Don't Give Up, I'm a Winner!* bursaries, each worth \$1,000, to adults who went back to school in order in particular to upgrade their reading and writing skills. Minister Yves Bolduc will be attending the event, where he will present an address on the importance of reading. Actor Alexis Martin will act as master of ceremonies for the event.

"In Quebec, the statistics are alarming: one adult in two has a very hard time reading and writing," stated Diane Mockle, Chief Executive Officer of the Literacy Foundation. "There's more to illiteracy than the dictionary definition of 'inability to read and write.' Unceasing advances in technology in all sectors of the economy are transforming patterns of production and work organization. They call for the development and acquisition of ever more cutting-edge reading comprehension skills in order to meet not only the demands of the labour market, but also the requirements for functioning effectively in society. The Literacy Foundation devotes all its energy to supporting adults and children in order to ensure the development of their ability to read and write so they can participate fully in our society. In today's Quebec, it's not acceptable for close to 50% of the population to have difficulty reading and writing. There's no miracle solution: we have to invest in promoting lifelong reading and writing in order to build a prosperous society!"

Five bursaries awarded to adults who have persevered in pursuing their literacy training and have attained their goals!

For the past four years, the Literacy Foundation has offered the *I Don't Give Up, I'm a Winner!* bursaries, through the generosity of Fondation Desjardins. **The 2014 bursary recipients are: Fatime Hamid of Montreal, Isabelle Despatis of Nomingue, Jocelyn Bilodeau of Saint-Urbain, Manuel Fernando Gassos of Shawinigan, and Ntahish Karianne Clary-Weizineau of Trois-Rivières.** Since going back to school for basic training, these individuals have overcome barriers with courage and perseverance, and are in the process of attaining their personal and professional goals. Their determination to fulfil their ambitions is a fine example, and they deserve our sincere congratulations! Note that the recipients will be on-site to receive their bursaries, and will be available to talk with journalists on request.

Access to free, confidential, personalized resources is a phone call away

Adults with low reading proficiency seeking to upgrade their skills have numerous resources available to them. *Info-Alpha* telephone line operators are equipped to propose targeted **training** approaches geared to each individual, throughout Quebec. Pass the word! Call *Info Alpha* at 1-800-361-9142!

About Fondation Desjardins

Founded in 1970, Fondation Desjardins is a charity that makes education its priority: helping youth stay in school and cutting back the dropout rate so young people can fulfil their dreams and ambitions. As a component of *Mouvement des caisses Desjardins*, Canada's first co-operative financial group, Fondation Desjardins will be awarding in 2014 more than 700 scholarships, bursaries and awards, for total financial assistance of more than \$1.5 million. In addition to offering scholarship and bursary programs, Fondation Desjardins manages philanthropic partnerships, primarily major fundraising campaigns of university and teaching hospital foundations. It also offers awards to recognize community involvement and volunteering efforts by its directors, employees and members, across Quebec and Ontario. To find out more, consult www.desjardins.com/en/fondation.

About the Literacy Foundation

Founded in 1989, the Literacy Foundation is a non-profit organization whose mission is to support adults and children in order to ensure the development of their ability to read and write so they can participate fully in society. To help the Foundation, make a donation at fondationalphabetisation.org/en.

Source:

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