

## Outreach Initiatives – Sharing the Love

The Outreach Committee plays an important role in supporting local, national, and international organizations in their literacy programming. A portion of conference registration fees is directed to providing funding for this initiative. In this way, by attending the *Reading for the Love Of It* conference, educators are supporting great literacy organizations in our local and global community!

With your help, the Outreach Committee was able to donate to 14 different organizations that provide literacy-focused services to children and families. Some of these programmes offer services for newcomers and English language learners, access to digital resources in developing countries, education support for indigenous youth, and reading materials for women and children fleeing violence.

2020 has confronted us all with new and unexpected challenges. Many educators, as well as the *Reading for the Love Of It* conference, were impacted by labour disruptions as a result of ongoing negotiations between teachers unions and the Ontario government. Then almost immediately after the conference, people in Canada and around the world were faced with unprecedented changes in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Not-for-profit organizations, like those that the Outreach Committee supports, have been particularly hard hit by the new realities of COVID-19. Employees have been laid off, donations are down, and major fundraising events have been canceled or postponed. Estimates suggest that the potential financial impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the charitable sector could be a loss of up to \$25 million. In light of this devastating blow to not-for-profit organizations, our outreach initiatives are even more necessary and appreciated than ever.

In the new reality of COVID-19 some of the not-for-profit organizations that we have supported this year have found innovative ways to continue to serve the needs of their community. For example The DAM (Develop Assist Mentor) Meadowvale continues to provide services to youth through online drop-ins, chats, phone, and video conferencing. The Forgiveness Project used Facebook Live to run an online community letter writing event as part of their programming for youth in detention centres. FoodShare Toronto, which is a huge supporter of breakfast programs in schools, has adapted by providing emergency healthy food boxes to families in need. This is one of the food-focused organizations that our organization included in this year's list of outreach recipients in order to contribute to their efforts to support students and families. Together, these examples help to show how creative and committed not-for-profit organizations are in their efforts to serve their communities.

Please consider making a donation to an organization in your local community to support their work during these difficult times. And thank you again for helping us to help others. Together we can and do make a positive difference!

**Article by Natasha Serba, EYSRA**

## OUTREACH PROJECTS For 2019-2020

The East York-Scarborough Reading Association is proud to support the following projects this year:

### Local:

- East York Learning Experience
- Jewish Immigration Aid Services
- Parkdale Project Read
- Red Door Family Shelter
- Redwood Shelter

- Sistering
- The Dam (Develop\*Assist\*Mentor) Youth Drop-In – Meadowvale
- The Forgiveness Project

### National

- First Book Canada
- First Nations Teachers
- Indspire

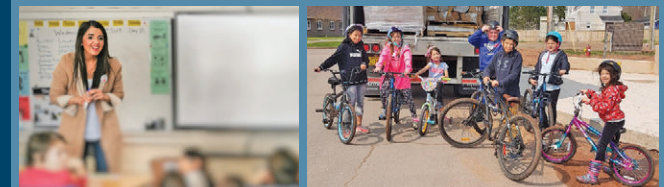
### International

- Azizi Life
- Cotlands (Early Childhood Literacy)
- Hestia Hellas – Supporting Refugee Language & Literacy Programs in Athens, Greece
- Libraries Without Borders

**All proceeds are directed toward local, national and international communities. Thank you for your support!**



Volunteer, Wendy Hearn joins EYSRA executives Kishauna Evans-Blissett and Mike Francone at the Outreach Table



**First Book Canada** is a nonprofit social enterprise that provides Canadian children and youth with equal access to quality education so that all kids can reach their full potential. By working with heroic educators, program coordinators, and other professionals working in under-served communities, we provide brand new, high-quality books and educational resources to kids in high needs communities. Please visit [www.firstbookcanada.org](http://www.firstbookcanada.org) to find out how to get involved! Eligible educators, program coordinators, librarians, and professionals serving kids in need can register, for free, at [www.fbmpcanada.org/register](http://www.fbmpcanada.org/register).

