



THE  
LEACOCK  
FOUNDATION

LEAPING INTO THE FUTURE, LEADING WITH PURPOSE:  
**STORIES OF IMPACT** FROM THE LEACOCK FOUNDATION

2015 DONOR REPORT

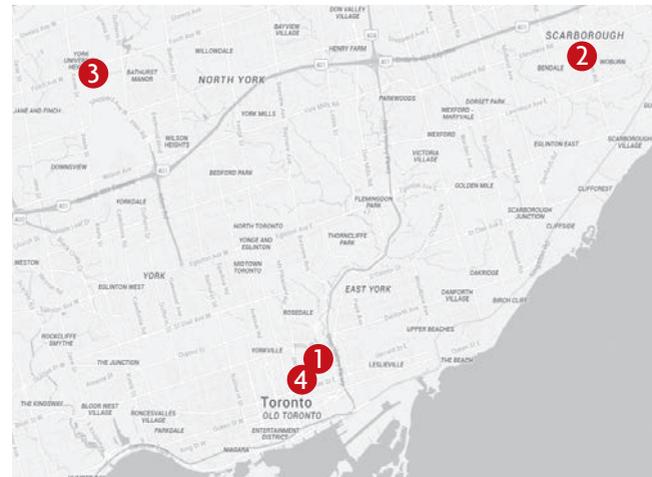


## WHERE WE WORK:

Toronto, Canada

4 underserved communities throughout the city

- 1 St. James Town
- 2 Scarborough, Woburn community
- 3 Keele-Finch
- 4 First Nations School community in Regent Park



Eastern Cape, South Africa

3 low-fee independent school campuses

- 1 Get Ahead Project School in Queenstown (Reception – Grade 7)
- 2 Get Ahead Project School in Whittlesea (Reception – Grade 9)
- 3 Get Ahead Project College in Queenstown (Grade 8 – Grade 12)



## OUR MISSION:

The Leacock Foundation enables and supports youth to develop skills, competencies, and confidence through:

- Educational Enrichment
- Leadership Initiatives
- Connections and Partnerships

## OUR VISION:

Inspire youth in Canada and South Africa to overcome barriers, unlock their potential, and contribute to their communities.

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## A LETTER FROM PETER OLIVER

PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER OF  
THE LEACOCK FOUNDATION



Anyone who has ever climbed a mountain or hiked through challenging terrain knows that in order to reach the summit a series of small focused steps are required. If you start off too fast, you'll tire before the end, and if you spend too much time resting, you will

lose sight of your purpose. At first, each of those small steps seems insignificant, but there comes a moment on the journey when you look back at where you started and you realize just how far you have come. At this time, in our Leacock journey, I feel we are able to look back and truly celebrate what we have achieved, while at the same time enjoy a renewed sense of vigour and purpose as our summit is just visible on the horizon.

In Toronto, working with our school partners in our designated communities, we have developed programming that offers a comprehensive continuum of care that keeps young people engaged in learning from Grade 1 through to high school. Each program was developed with the needs of the children and community in mind ensuring that underserved youth have access to the kinds of educational and social tools they need to become successful contributors to their communities. Our new Leacock **LEADership Overnight Camp**, launched in July of 2015, was an enormous success and we can't wait to continue to develop this program with our partners at the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA).



In South Africa, our partnership with the **Get Ahead Project (GAP) Schools** is poised to take off in new exciting directions. Having spent the last few years improving the facilities, upgrading the technology resources and working with the teaching staff to raise the level of instruction, we are ready to push forward with ambitious plans for **STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Arts and Math)** programming including a dedicated STEAM Centre, comprehensive teacher professional development and ongoing opportunities for students to access the latest and best curriculum for science and math. Our purpose is simple: to equip GAP students with the skills they need to succeed after high school in post secondary education and in a competitive job market.

Leacock programming now reaches nearly 3,000 young people each year. What better way to understand the impact of our programs, and to appreciate how far we have come, than to share with you personal stories from program participants in Toronto and at the GAP Schools in South Africa.



With a series of firsthand accounts from students in programs such as **Saturday Morning Club, Reading Buddies, LEAD through Trails, LEAD into Innovation** and our **GAP Student Sponsorship** program, this year's annual report highlights how Leacock programming is making a deep and lasting difference in the lives of young people. We hope you will enjoy celebrating the children's successes and seeing how much your support means to these emerging young leaders.

Each one of you is a part of every story, because without you, we could not continue to move step by step towards our mission to support underserved youth in unlocking their potential.

Thank you for being a part of the journey.



# A CLOSER LOOK AT THE NEED IN TORONTO



Toronto has the **highest child poverty rate** compared to all other major Canadian cities at **29%**, or **145,890** children

\*The poverty line in Toronto or Low Income Measure After Tax is an income below \$30,000 per year, per household, after taxes



Poverty has become increasingly concentrated in certain Toronto neighbourhoods, creating “**have and have-not**” communities



A look at child poverty rates in our designated communities:

**North St. James Town 46%**

**Woburn (Scarborough) 38%**

**Keele-Finch (York University Heights) 33%**

Average annual income of an **Aboriginal household** in Toronto is **\$35,000**



Children in families with incomes below \$30,000 per year are **half as likely** to be involved in weekly or monthly extracurricular activities

At the Leacock Foundation we believe that **every child has enormous potential**. Our literacy and leadership programs are designed to help youth reach their goals, become leaders and contribute to their communities.

Sources:  
• Social Planning Toronto, Toronto Family and Child Poverty Update, 2015  
• Statistics Canada  
• The Hidden Epidemic: A Report on Child and Family Poverty in Toronto, November 2014  
• 2014 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Canada, Campaign 2000, November 2014  
• Toronto Aboriginal Persons Demographic Snapshot 2006, City of Toronto Social Development, 2008

In 2015, **1,275 underserved youth** in Toronto were impacted by Leacock literacy and leadership programs



**IN 2015:** 250 junior students participated in **Summer Literacy Day Camp** and 50 students were a part of **March Break LEAP Camp**

165 students actively participated in **Saturday Morning Club**, a 15 week literacy and recreation based program



56 students from Rose Avenue Junior Public School received one-on-one support in math and reading through the after school **Reading Buddies** and **JUMP Math** programs



337 youth participated in **LEAD through Trails**, an outdoor experiential learning program that fosters independence, leadership and teamwork

120 youth each spent one week embracing nature and discovering the leader within at **Leacock Summer LEADership Camp**



At **YUVA (Youth United in Visionary Action)** 25 youth spent 2 nights a week creating a community action plan which they presented in Ottawa over March Break

At **Lead into Innovation**, over 7 consecutive Saturdays, **32 youth** were challenged to develop an innovative prototype to bring positive change to their communities



## MEET REID

Hello! My name is Reid Macfarlane. I am a Grade 11 student at Greenwood College School and have been fortunate to be involved with the LEAD through Trails program run by the Leacock Foundation. The Trails program offers children in Grade 4 and 5 the opportunity to experience the great outdoors at different locations across the GTA.

Currently, I work with a Grade 4/5 class at Woburn Junior Public School and have taken these students out on two different outdoor excursions — outdoor activities in the fall and snowshoeing in the winter. On these excursions it has been so exciting to see how much the students enjoy being outdoors. Most of us live in an urban landscape and technology has become such a significant part of our lives, so it is an increasingly rare pleasure to experience a full school day in the calm outdoors.

One of my favourite experiences was snowshoeing with the students up at Bruce's Mill, a beautiful conservation area that is conveniently situated on the outskirts of the city. The students I have been working with have been affected so positively by these experiences.



**“Each time I visit the students in their classroom to discuss our recent outing, they always greet me with a grin and a barrage of enthusiastic and enriching memories”**

It is extremely rewarding to know how my participation in Trails can make an impact on these children's lives. They in turn have enriched my life. My interest in the sciences will most likely lead me down the path of medicine and I hope that one day I will be able to work with children to use the many lessons I have drawn from the Trails program.



## MEET SASHA



I am very proud to say that I have volunteered in a number of the Leacock Foundation's programs for the past three years.

My first direct involvement was through the Reading Buddies program when I was in Grade 10. I've always had an immense passion for books, so doing what I could to instil that same love of reading in other students was a natural step for me. Reading Buddies has been a constant fixture in my life and now as one of the program's current student co-heads, I have the opportunity to motivate and lead new Branksome Hall tutors. Reading Buddies has changed the way I view literacy and was foundational in sparking my passion for working with children.

I enjoyed my experience with Reading Buddies so much that I volunteered for Leacock's Leap into Literacy Day Camp for the next two summers. Some of my fondest memories involve my interactions with a student who needed some extra help during writing and reading activities. On the last day of camp she brought me a gift, a book from her own home called *If We Survive*, which is still the best present I have ever received. It was absolutely remarkable to witness how much the student had blossomed over only two weeks at Leap into Literacy Summer Day Camp.

The last Leacock program that I became involved in was LEAD through Trails. I worked as a Branksome Hall student co-head for Grade 10 and loved my experience so much that I asked to reprise my role the following year. Trails' outdoor activities are undoubtedly fun; however, they also prompt astonishing growth. I saw students run out of their comfort zones, demonstrate independence and leadership and create friendships with one another that lasted over the whole two years I was involved in the program and beyond, I'm certain.

**“It's very heartening as a volunteer to see students respond with such enthusiasm. This was undoubtedly my favourite part of my Trails experience.”**

I credit the Leacock Foundation's programs with instilling independence, positivity, strength of character, and a thirst for knowledge in the students I've worked with. My involvement with the Foundation's initiatives has changed how I view service learning, and has sparked a life-long commitment to service.



## MEET JUNIOR STUDENT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

“Leacock’s programs help with my grades. I’m still in ESL and I’m bumping my grades to a B and an A.”

Rohil, Grade 6



“Saturday Morning Club helps because we do some literacy, writing, make infographics and make posters.”

Sarah, Grade 5

“I am thankful for summer camp because it is very interesting. We get to go on lots of fun trips and see lots of unique animals. The learning is helping me answer hard questions.”

Anmol, Grade 5



“I want to be a volunteer for summer camp when I am older.”

Abulfazl, Grade 5

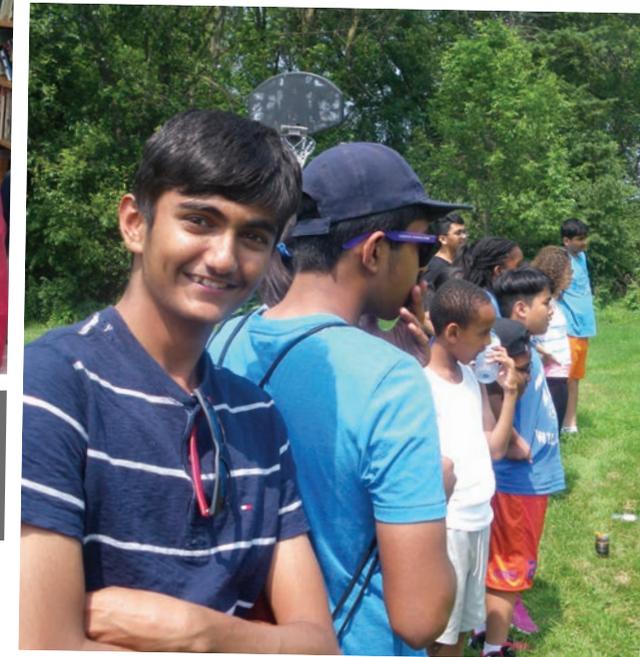


## MEET KENIL

I am a Grade 9 student attending Woburn Collegiate Institute in Scarborough. I started volunteering with the Leacock Foundation during the summer of 2015, when I graduated from Grade 8. The Leap into Literacy Summer Day Camp and Saturday Morning Club program gave me a chance to help kids with literacy and recreational sports. It was a lot of hard work, but it was so beneficial — I had an opportunity to give back to my community.

I have also become involved in the program Lead into Innovation. I joined the club in Grade 8 when it first started. It not only taught me how to become a better entrepreneur, but it also expanded my ability to think. The staff and volunteers were always willing to help us and gave us complicated challenges to work on finding solutions for.

Volunteering with Leap into Literacy and Saturday Morning Club are not experiences I can easily forget. Along with the students, I learned so much. Waking up early and looking forward to an amazing day became part of my routine. Each and every day I went home, I took a special memory with me, such as losing in games against younger kids. It was always adorable to see smiles on their faces.



The Leacock Foundation is not only educating kids, but also it helps kids recognize themselves and their interests. I discovered my interest when I was part of the Lead into Innovation program. I found that I am really good at building and creating prototypes.

My volunteer work with the Leacock Foundation is making a difference for the students I work with. In the future, I will continue to be involved. The Leacock Foundation is doing a marvellous job.

**“Leacock is providing other student volunteers and myself with a chance to become leaders through multiple programs and activities.”**

# A CLOSER LOOK AT THE NEED IN SOUTH AFRICA



Almost half of South Africa's population is **under 25**

**65%** of children entering primary school today in Africa will end up working in completely **new job types that don't yet exist**

Unemployment among youth (15–24) in South Africa is **51%**, double the national rate

While South Africa has seen significant progress in recent years, the country is facing a **skills shortage** in the **labour market**



There is a **high demand** for jobs related to **math and science**: engineering, skilled trades, teaching, accounting, finance and IT



Across all sectors, there are approximately **3 unskilled workers/semi-skilled workers to every skilled worker**

In partnership with the Get Ahead Project (GAP) Schools in Queenstown and Whitlesea, the Leacock Foundation is committed to providing students with a **quality education that empowers young people** to take on their future, no matter their current circumstances.



**IN 2015:** 120 work stations were loaded with **Master Maths** educational software



**90%** of grade 12 students at Get Ahead College passed the government-administered **matric exam**. The pass rate for the Eastern Cape province was 57%

Each week, **over 90 students** were engaged in **Extended Day Learning** including extra support in math and literacy

An **Executive Director** based in South Africa was hired to work closely with school heads, teachers and school administration to **integrate a curriculum with a strong focus on math and science**



**2 teacher training programs** taught staff how to better **incorporate technology** in the classroom



**1,500 students** receive a quality education at the GAP Schools

Sources:

- The World Bank, South Africa Economic Update: Jobs and South Africa's Changing Demographics, 2015
- Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook, South Africa
- The Future of Jobs: What will Survive, What Won't and What it Means for Africa, Samantha Spooner, January 2016, Mail and Guardian Africa
- South Africa's Skills Deficit has a Negative Effect on Employment, Lisa Steyn, May 2015, Mail and Guardian Africa
- South Africa Back in Top 50 of Global Competitiveness Index, November 2015, The Citizen

## MEET SANELE



The year 2000 was a tragic year for my family and I. We lost both breadwinners of the household, my parents and my aunt took both my sister and me in. My aunt was a teacher who had her own children to look after. She approached the principal of Get Ahead Project, Mrs. Crankshaw, as she could not afford to pay for our school fees. My sister and I were one of the first students to be sponsored by the Leacock Foundation. We were given the opportunity to go to one of the best schools in our area, Queenstown, without having to worry about how we would pay for next month's school fees.

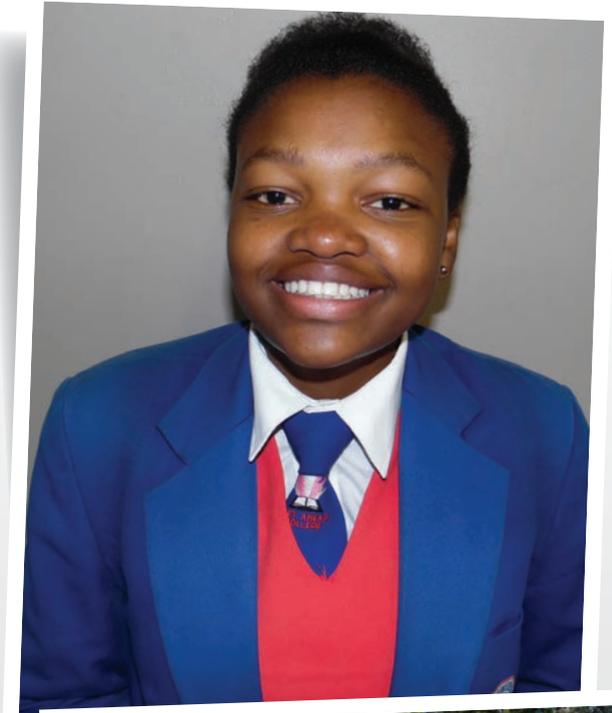
The Foundation sponsored my sister from Grade 8 to Grade 12. She obtained her qualification and is now a graduate. The Foundation made all of this possible and she will forever be grateful. I, on the other hand, was sponsored from Grade 2 to Grade 12. This year, I am registered with the University of Johannesburg. I have an exciting year ahead with many possibilities. My niece, who is also a sponsored student at the Get Ahead Project School in Queenstown, is currently in Grade 5 and loves school.

My mother wanted us to be educated and encouraged that we all go to school (I was told this by my siblings as I was too young to remember). When I am older, I would like to sponsor one of the disadvantaged children at Get Ahead because I know how important education is and how painful it is to be young and have to worry that your family cannot afford to pay for your fees.

I will forever be grateful to the Leacock Foundation and Get Ahead.

**“The Leacock Foundation ensured that two generations of my family acquired quality education.”**

## MEET ZIKHONA



I do not even know where to begin. I find it difficult to find the right words to show you how appreciative and grateful I am for your generosity. As a child growing up, I knew that I would not always get what I wanted due to the financial status at home and learned from a young age that through hard work and dedication, I might be able to escape this financial burden that my parents find themselves in.

You are the remaining hope and faith I have that our world actually cares. It is because of you that I believe that there are still individuals that treat people with respect and equality with no discrimination. Our world needs more people like you. You give definition to the word UBUNTU, the quality of being a good human being, which involves accepting others as a part of our lives and being generous towards them.

Growing up I wanted to be a teacher. I loved being around people and always thought teachers were somewhat heroic because they get to touch the lives of each and every student. However, now that I am in Grade 10, I have fallen in love with the central nervous system, especially the brain. I want to study to become a neurologist one day. This might sound cliché, but I would love to be able to help people, including my father, who are unable to carry on living their lives because their most crucial system has been damaged.



**“The Leacock Foundation is helping me pursue my dreams. You have opened doors for me and provided me with so many opportunities.”**



## MEET NICHUME

This letter serves as a form of gratitude for the support that I have been awarded with. I have had an amazing academic year because of all the love and giving hearts you have. I am proud to say that without your financial support I would not have made it to Grade 12. From the very first day I received your sponsorship, I knew it would near my dreams of becoming a trauma surgeon. My parents could afford to buy me extra tools to assist with my studies because of your financial support. If it were possible, I would go to Canada and resuscitate every citizen — just as a form of gratitude.

Once again, your support has made a huge difference in my family. It is so sad to know that I am doing my final grade this year at Get Ahead College. That simply means my journey with the Leacock Foundation will soon come to an end. You will forever hold a special place in my heart.

I will continue striving for the best marks and I will continue to inspire other learners. It is not by chance that I get to achieve such high marks, but by choice.

**“Your contribution towards my education has made me realize the significance of giving and most importantly, the effects that giving has on people.”**



## LOOKING AHEAD

The year 2016 will be an exciting time of growth at the Leacock Foundation in Toronto as well as abroad in South Africa.

After a successful inaugural year of Leacock’s week-long summer LEADership overnight camp in Toronto, we are absolutely thrilled to share news of its expansion. Offered to Grade 5 and 6 students in three of our designated neighbourhoods, St James Town, Woburn and the Keele-Finch community, this program was launched in 2015 in partnership with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), after recognizing the need for summer leadership opportunities. Throughout the month of July, campers visited TRCA’s Albion Hills and took part in leadership development activities such as high ropes, canoeing, hiking, camp fires, shelter building and team games. In only a week’s time, it was clear that many of the students had become confident leaders and grew to love being outdoors. Because of the overwhelming positive response of this pilot program, 2016 will see LEADership overnight camp expand to two months, running to the end of August.

Also this year, an exciting new chapter will evolve in the Leacock Foundation’s partnership with the Get Ahead Project (GAP) Schools in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. An Executive Director based in South Africa has been hired and tasked with leading the strategic vision of the GAP schools. Mariette Visser, an educator native to South Africa, will first focus on integrating a STEAM based (Science, Technology, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Arts and Maths) educational curriculum. Program development in these important areas of study will better equip graduates in their life after Get Ahead. Mariette will work closely with teachers and school administration in providing professional development for staff, enriching after-school math and science instruction, as well as developing engaging classroom tools.

We can’t wait to see how the year unfolds and look forward to keeping you informed on the growing impact of your support for the Leacock Foundation.



## FINANCIAL REPORT: 2015

REVENUE	2015
Memberships and Donations	\$567,462
Fund raising activities, special events and other	\$456,478
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,023,940</b>
Direct fund raising, special event and marketing expenses	(\$247,178)
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>\$776,762</b>

EXPENSES	
Program support funding: South Africa Programs	\$183,144
Program support funding: Toronto Programs	\$429,132
Marketing and indirect fundraising expenses	\$27,221
General Administration	\$91,130
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$730,627</b>
Surplus	\$46,135
Fund balance at beginning of year	\$773,946
Fund balance at end of year	\$820,081

## A MESSAGE FROM **THE LEACOCK TEAM**

As we look back on 2015, we feel so grateful for the support of our members, program partners and volunteers. It is because of your commitment to our work that we are able to succeed in our mission to support underserved youth in unlocking their potential.

Because of you, children who come from families facing economic hardships here in Toronto and abroad in South Africa have the opportunity to be involved in programs that develop academic skills, build confidence and inspire community leadership.

We are pleased to share with you in our Annual Report a selection of stories from children involved in our programs. I am sure you will agree they are thriving and making a difference in their communities as well as becoming young leaders with bright futures. Our focus on building a continuum of care that supports student growth throughout their academic career is paying huge dividends both here in Toronto and in South Africa. Each of you plays a vital role in bringing these stories to life as we could not deliver quality programming without your generous support.

On behalf of the youth featured in this report, and the almost three thousand others who are touched by your generosity each day, please accept our sincerest thanks.

Warmly,  
Kristine, Heather,  
Patricia and Lynn



Peter Oliver	<i>President</i>
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Eastern Cape Province,  
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