

Annual Report

2024-2025



This Employment Ontario program is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

Board of Directors 2024-2025

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Alicia Gallant, Educational
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Thank You to Our Volunteers

Anne Oakes
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What We Do

As Hamilton's adult learning network we provide [educational planning services](#) for youth and adults wanting to upgrade their skills or retrain. We work with people to develop plans that are individual and goal oriented. Plans could include referrals to skills upgrading, completing high school, getting into post-secondary, apprenticeship training, other training or employment services.

We work closely with our adult education partners across the city to develop the annual [Literacy Service Plan](#). This plan identifies key issues and actions that we work on throughout the year. We also coordinate an annual practitioner conference and spotlight sessions for learners.

We offer [Clear Writing and Accessibility](#) training and consulting services. We offer workshops, document editing as well as a 12-week online course through the Learning Networks of Ontario.

We also support employers with our [Workplace Education Services](#). We can help employers identify skill gaps and create a customized training plan to increase employees' skills now and for the future.

Want to get literacy, education and employment updates all in one place?
[Subscribe to our monthly newsletter.](#)

Mission, Moral Ownership and Ends



Our Mission

People in Hamilton will have a better quality of life through lifelong learning.



Our Moral Ownership

(who we serve)

We support adults through lifelong learning to reach their goals. We support community partners to provide and coordinate services that support lifelong learning.

Our Mega Ends

(what we want to achieve and for whom)

1. Access to Information and Supports

- Information about adult education programs and services will be complete, current and accessible.
- We'll support individuals to plan and connect to the supports and services that they need to reach their goals.

2. Community Benefits and Partnerships

- We provide the community with an objective support network for educational planning.
- Partnerships will support lifelong learning.

3. Moral Ownership Support

- Individuals will be encouraged and supported to achieve their goals through pathway planning, coaching, mentorship and guidance.
- Community partners will be supported through collaboration, service coordination and professional development.

4. Impact

- The public will be connected to lifelong learning opportunities.
- Opportunities for positive change will be identified and explored.
- Gaps in service will be identified and addressed.

A Message From the Chair

Elisha Turney-Foss

2024-2025 was Year 1 of our new 3-year strategic plan for 2024-2027. This plan focuses on 6 key areas.

1. Diversifying and Increasing Revenue
2. Establishing ABEA as a Safe Space for Everyone in the Community
3. Developing a Human Resource Strategy
4. Creating an Active and Robust Digital Strategy
5. Increasing the Visibility of the Organization
6. Contributing to and Sharing Research in the Adult Education Space

I'm proud to report that we've made strides in all 6 areas this past year.

To ensure that ABEA is a safe space, the staff team worked diligently on developing commitment statements related to equity, diversity and inclusion, accessibility and a land acknowledgement. These statements are not meant to be standalone policies. They are meant to be ongoing commitments to learn, grow and embed in everything we do. The spirit of these commitments is entrenched in our evolving human resources strategy.

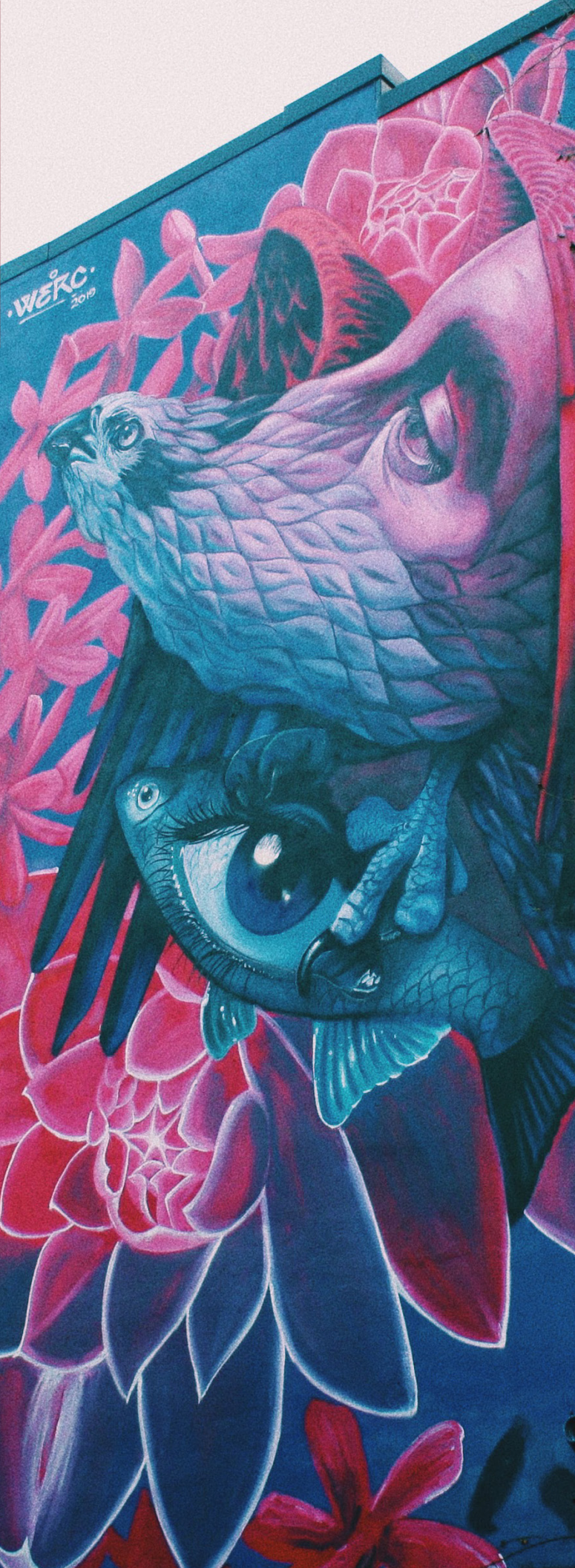
Our digital strategy continues to expand, with remote services continually being improved for greater accessibility. We've also explored and implemented digital safety measures. We continually integrate appropriate and responsive technology into our services.

We've spent a great deal of time this year considering the visibility of ABEA. In March 2024 we conducted research with our community partners to understand how our name resonates with those we work with. Over the past fiscal year, we've been exploring rebranding by reviewing our target audience and defining our key work. This will help us determine how to grow and thrive well into the future. A huge thank you to Saher Saeed who has led us through this dynamic process.

As we celebrate our successes, it's also important to acknowledge the contributions of those who have served on the board of directors. This year, we say goodbye to Danielle Just. Danielle's contributions have been instrumental in shaping the direction of ABEA. She will be missed. We wish her well as she embarks on new adventures.

A heartfelt thank you to all our directors for your commitment, your passion and your ongoing support of the important work of ABEA. I have no doubt that our collective efforts will continue to drive positive change for ABEA and in our community for years to come.

Elisha Turney-Foss
Board Chair



From the Executive Director

Sara Gill

2024-2025 was a year of significant growth and collaboration.

Our Educational Planning Services continued to grow to serve the needs of community members and community partners. Since 2022-2023 we've increased our total client contacts by 38% to 2,994 (up from 2,163). This increase is mostly due to increased outreach and information and referral activities across the community. We are very grateful for the funding we received to support this work through

- Hamilton Community Foundation
- ArcelorMittal Dofasco Corporate Community Investment Fund
- City of Hamilton Community Enrichment Fund
- Telus Friendly Future Foundation

We are particularly proud of the work we are doing to raise awareness about apprenticeship and the skilled trades. Through this work we're encouraging more people to explore and pursue these careers. But we're also providing support around upgrading, training and supports along the apprenticeship pathway.

Because of our focus on supporting apprenticeship, we also partnered with Literacy Link South Central to support their apprenticeship projects. We supported the development of their [Step Up for Succeed Employer Resource Hub](#). We also supported the [Literacy and Basic Skills Apprenticeship Toolkit](#) for adult literacy practitioners. We're continuing this work into 25-26.

Our Community Partners/ Networks

Employment Ontario - Literacy and Basic Skills Service Providers

CNIB – Deafblind Community Services

Collège Boréal D'Arts Appliqués et de Technologie

Continuing Education - Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

Hamilton Literacy Council

Hamilton Regional Indian Centre – Native Learning Centre

Mohawk College – Academic Upgrading, Deaf Empowerment Program

St. Charles Adult & Continuing Education Centres – Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board

Employment Ontario – Employment Services

Hamilton Employment Resource Network (HERN)

Hamilton Disability Employment Network (HDEN)

Learning Networks of Ontario

Mohawk College – Challenge 2025

Our Future Hamilton – Community Partner

Ontario Works

Redbook Community Network

Skills Development Flagship Committee

We have also built relationships with our partners serving newcomers. Many newcomers, particularly those in language programs, have further education, training and employment goals. We provide presentations about adult learning options in Hamilton. We also provide 1:1 planning sessions to help learners identify the steps towards their goals.

Another area of focus is community planning and service coordination. We facilitate several planning groups in Hamilton to encourage communication and partnership development through the

- Literacy Community Planning (LCP) Committee
- Literacy and Basic Skills Frontline Working Group
- Hamilton Employment Ontario Network
- Skills Development Flagship Group

Thank You to Our Board of Directors

Thank you so much to ABEA's Board of Directors for their insight, guidance and support over the last year. I'm proud of our work to date on our strategic plan for 2024-2027. I'm excited about tackling the year 2 actions in 25-26. Collectively, we continue to build relationships and work collaboratively with our community partners across the city and across the province to support skills upgrading, training and education.

Sara Gill
Executive Director

Congratulations to our

Leaders in Literacy

Award Winners 2025!

Lynne Livingstone Memorial Award
City School by Mohawk

Kim Brooks Memorial Lifelong Learning Award
Anita Silva

Excellence in Adult Education Practitioner Award
Sarah Silva

The CIBC Murphy Investment Group Individual Early Literacy Education Award
Heather Bruno

Agency Early Literacy Education Award
La garderie Le petit navire

The Hamilton Spectator Adult Literacy Learner Award

Antonio Mercado – Continuing Education, HWDSB

Jennifer Anger – Hamilton Literacy Council

Peter Suwala – Mohawk College, Deaf Empowerment Program (DEP)

Roxanne Miller – Hamilton Regional Indian Centre, Native Learning Centre

Tamara Robertson-Almeida – Conestoga College, Academic Upgrading

Thank you to our award sponsors

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