



LOCAL
INVESTMENT
TOWARD
EMPLOYMENT



ANNUAL REPORT

2015 - 16

Executive Director's Report

It's been quite a year at LITE and June 2016 signals the end of my tenure as Executive Director. Over the 3 years I've been here, I've become intimately familiar with the history and operations of this very unique organization - and proud to be a part of it. In the charity world, LITE inhabits its own niche - one where we KNOW that a gift can have positive impact that goes far beyond the act of giving.

As we work hard on growing our donations (this year and last year were the 2 highest donation years in LITE's history) attracting new donors is critical. But we must also remain relevant to our long-time supporters, and I think the fact that so many have been with LITE for so long, is proof that our mission of poverty alleviation through employment resonates.

Thanks to those donors, LITE had our highest disbursement level ever in the last year. We secured some critical core funding to help stabilize operations and we're very close to having our own Endowment Fund.

Huge thanks to our hard-working staff, the 190 awesome volunteers including our dedicated Board, and to all the amazing agencies and enterprises to whom we contribute in the inner city. Together we are helping to change people's lives for the better.



Anne Lindsey,
Executive Director

Co-Chair's Report

It has been another busy year at LITE. The board focused on creating a sustainable long-term framework, and growing our capacity to support the community in job creation and capacity building. We remain rooted in our belief that employment is a key component of development and in the need for innovative solutions to employment challenges faced in the inner city.

We have changed the timing to our grant programs, set our sights on long term development and explored more sustainable funding models to ensure our programming and mission continues to be met in the long term.

LITE hosted two successful events. Our Wild Blueberry Pancake Breakfast continues to bring our community partners and supporters together, while attracting new people to LITE. We "re-branded" our LITE Gala and launched LITE up the NITE to focus on a new demographic of supporters and to generate new donations for our CED Small Grants Program.

We continued to promote LITE both within the community and in the larger Winnipeg market. We hosted our first photo exhibit throughout summer 2015, participated in various community and business forums and capitalized on social media to promote our various initiatives.

Thank you for your contribution.



Doug Forbes,
LITE Board Co-Chair



Janelle Whitley,
LITE Board Co-Chair

Fundraising Campaigns & Events

Run for Rights

June's 14th Annual Run for Rights at Kildonan Park saw 23 volunteers and 35 supporters pledging for LITE as they ran, walked, and cycled the 5 or 10km course – in total 300 people came out to support 16 organizations working for human rights. LITE participants raised \$3,890 towards our CED grants.



19th Annual Wild Blueberry Pancake Breakfast

LITE's signature event brought over 800 LITE supporters together at the Indian and Métis Friendship Centre on the morning of November 27th, 2015. They enjoyed a fair trade breakfast catered by our inner city partners, visited the Crafter's Market and took in wonderful performances by Jason Lepine, Ali Fontaine, Norman Chief Memorial Dancers, Buffalo Gals and Frannie Klein. LITE supporters and event sponsors; Assiniboine Credit Union, Border Glass, Thomas Sill Foundation and MGEU helped us bring in nearly \$25,000 towards our Alternative Hamper Campaign.



LITE up the NITE Casino Royale

For the first time, LITE hosted a night of glitz and glam at the Manitoba Hydro building on Saturday, March 12th, 2016 in support of our CED grants. The evening featured a red carpet, fancy hors d'oeuvres, VIP seating area, a DJ and dance floor, casino-style gaming and a Birchwood Luxury Car Auction. Over 200 guests came out to support LITE as well as 30 volunteers, and together we brought in \$20,000!



Workplace and Group Campaigns

Several new workplaces came on-board to fundraise towards our Alternative Hamper Campaign, resulting in hamper goods being distributed to 1600 inner city residents over the holidays, and increasing fundraising amounts from last year by nearly \$3,000. Our top workplace fundraisers were Great West Life, raising a record \$14,028 and the Women's Health Clinic with \$2,665. A special thanks to new local business Bronuts, who donated a day of proceeds from their sales!

Your Donations at Work in Our Community...



Alternative Hamper Campaign

LITE's unique dual purpose Christmas Hamper campaign that supports families in need and creates training and job opportunities for our partner organizations continued strong this year. In total, we spent \$37,500 on groceries, including all the fixin's for Christmas dinner, at Neechi Foods. Once again, the baked goods were purchased from Wolseley Family Place, Spence Neighbourhood Association and the Native Women's Transition Centre, for a total of \$5,566. Our strategic purchases meant that 75 work positions were supported, while 1600 inner city residents received hampers over the holidays.

Our hampers were packaged and distributed through Sam's Christmas (Project Echo), the Christmas Cheer Board, and our newest partner, Winnipeg Inner City Missions. A big shout out to all of their volunteers for the hundreds of hours of packing and delivery that are spent every year!

Star Blanket Project

CreeAtions Artists Showcase, and our new partner Manitoba Buckskin, were the makers of the 12 Star Blankets that we purchased – the total investment was \$4,669. This year, we incorporated the Star Blanket Project into our 12 Days of Giving social media campaign. LITE staff member Christa, along with intern Jewel, delivered the Star Blankets, took photos and found out about the fundraising initiatives they'd be used towards. We were pleased to learn that the majority are used as the grand prize in Raffles, and they're a big draw!



Recipients were:

- North Point Douglas Women's Resource Centre
- Villa Rosa
- Oyate Tipi Cumini Yape
- Wolseley Family Place
- Mount Carmel Clinic
- North End Women's Centre
- Artbeat Studio
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg
- Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba
- West Broadway Community Organization
- Mary Jane's Cooking School
- Wahbung Abinoonjiag Inc.



Community Economic Development (CED) Small Grants Program

LITE made a slight change to our Grants Disbursements last year, as our Grants will now all be given out in the month of June. In March, five agencies received grants for 2015 which were profiled in the 2014/2015 Annual Report and in June five more were awarded at LITE's AGM and the launch of our touring photo exhibit, *LITE Reduces Poverty. One Job at a Time.*

The exhibit toured around Winnipeg from June to September 2015 and featured framed photos with corresponding biographies from program participants of LITE-funded CED projects. Local photographer Chris Friesen created images from each of our partner organizations – one image from each was selected and interviews were conducted with the photo subjects, the program participants.



The goal of this exhibit was to highlight the positive impact for the individuals and community of LITE-funded projects. The touring component served to reach a new audience of potential LITE supporters and increase overall brand awareness. We were fortunate to have strong support from community partners on this initiative and the exhibit was displayed at the following locations; West End Cultural Centre, Sam's Place, Wawanesa Insurance/Assiniboine Credit Union, St. Vital Mall, Winnipeg James Armstrong Richardson International Airport, The Great-West Life Assurance Company, The Forks and the Union Centre.

The exhibit received media attention which also increased its reach – Shaw TV, Canstar and MyToba helped LITE spread the word about our “tour dates”.



We'd like to thank the program participants who so generously donated their time and passion to this initiative, sharing their personal stories of struggle and success for a public forum.

Here are a few quotes from the exhibit:

"That program saved me"

- Cheryl Henderson
North End Women's

Centre Emergency

Wages at The UpShoppe

"I'll most likely fix up my future house on my own. So the program gave me a life-long skill"

- Hassan Dahir

Immigrant and Refugee Community of
Manitoba Newcomer Skills Building

"It gives me valuable work experience, a paycheck, resources, a sense of belonging and hope for my future"

- Ana Cotton

Spence Neighbourhood Association Youth Crew
Assistant Coordinator.



Outreach, Media and Education

LITE continues to increase our brand awareness in the local community through numerous promotional opportunities including radio, print, social media, meetings and presentations.

Our Alternative Hamper Campaign was featured on the front page of the Metro, and a new commercial ran on radio station The Drive 94.3. The Breakfast, typically our biggest media draw, had some major competition this year with the Grey Cup in town! Even so, our friends at Shaw TV still made it out to cover our event.

A partnership with The Drive 94.3 for our first LITE up the NITE event was very beneficial towards getting the word out and increasing event attendance. We had a banner year for social media! LITE was chosen as the charitable recipient of the #unwrapwpg shop local Twitter campaign - the result of a partnership between The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and Assiniboine Credit Union.



Facebook "likes"
last year 2,143
this year 2,234

Twitter "followers"
last year 798
this year 1,029



Pitching LITE...

At stake: funding to help you do something really important for your work. The challenge: to pitch your organization, and why that funding would make a difference in 3 minutes or less. Easy, right? Wrong.



As 17 representatives from varied charities discovered during the Winnipeg Foundation's first ever Fast Pitch event, describing your work in all its beauty and complexity is really tough to do in 3 minutes. Especially when you're pitching to people who aren't in your "bubble". But the effort paid off - LITE placed 2nd, earning a total of \$3000 to help us kick start our planned Endowment Fund. We got to share our story with a whole new audience, and we gained a new Board member - my coach, Ainsley Donald. Check out the LITE pitch at www.lite.mb.ca/news-centre/lite-blog/.
-Anne Lindsey, Executive Director

Strengthening our Local Economy with the Social Purchasing Portal

2015/2016 was a year of transition for the Social Purchasing Portal (SPP). SPP Coordinator Erika Frey moved on to new opportunities and was replaced by Josh Derbecker. In addition, the SPP ended the year with a transition of funders. We thank The Co-operators and The Winnipeg Foundation for three years of strong support. We look forward to the next four years of basic funding from the Manitoba Government.



This year, the Purchaser side of the SPP saw significant improvement. While total Purchasers' spending was similar to 2014/2015, that spending was spread out more evenly amongst the Purchasers. So while in previous years, spending was more concentrated, this year the average Purchaser spending with SPP suppliers increased. Our Purchaser Partner directory also grew with The Winnipeg Foundation, Protegra and the NDP caucus joining the SPP.



The Supplier directory also saw some new faces. Finally the SPP has an office supplier: Brock's Office - we were just as excited to have them as they were to join! Fools & Horses Coffee, which is not just a coffee shop but a new community meeting place and huge achiever in the area of waste reduction, also joined the SPP.



Employment is where we saw the most impactful growth. From 9 job opportunities for people facing barriers to employment last year, Supplier Partners hired 28 people this year, an increase of 311%! We have placed a greater emphasis on working with Suppliers and empowering them to hire independently, to overwhelming success. The Manitoba Research Alliance provided a small grant to assist in a project looking at best practices for employers hiring people who face barriers. We hope to provide additional resources to employers as a result.



Our annual events, the Holiday Shopping Tour and Networking Expo, were both well-received amongst our community supporters with Shopping Tour patrons spending over \$3,300 in just 4 hours. The Expo benefitted from funding from The Canadian CED Network and the Manitoba Social Enterprise Strategy, resulting in a larger and more successful Expo than in previous years.

After this strong transition year we are looking forward to a year of growth. With new funding and a new direction, it will be exciting to follow this project as it builds stronger communities, one purchase at a time.

Acknowledgements

LITE runs our office and programs on a shoestring budget, but the costs of salaries, rent, insurance and basic infrastructure add up! Our major funders for LITE and the SPP are highlighted below, and as always we thank all the others who contributed to LITE this year: CUPE Regional, MGEU and ACTE Local 1725, Event Sponsorships from the Thomas Sill Foundation, MGEU, Border Glass, Assiniboine Credit Union, Manitoba Hydro, Birchwood Automotive Group, and 94.3 The Drive.

To all the wonderful businesses who generously respond to our requests for auction and raffle prizes - our gratitude. To the volunteers and professionals who advised and provided their expertise - thank you! And to all of our lovely donors (and a special shout out to the champions who organize all those campaigns) - your kindness is what makes our purchases and small grants possible. You are LITE, and we can't thank you enough.

See our annual newsletter (lite.mb.ca) for a complete list of LITE donors in 2015 - 16.

Funders



Special thanks to LITE Advocate
The Great-West Life Assurance Company for your 2015 gift



And special thanks to Community Advocates The Prairie Dawn Foundation & The Waterbury Foundation for their generous gifts in 2015.

2015 - 16 LITE Team

Board Members

- Janelle Whitley
Co-Chair
- Doug Forbes
Co-Chair
- Lindsey McBain
Secretary
- Deborah Sterling
Treasurer
- Brent Vandurme
- Dave Oomah
- Lynn Ann Lauriault
- Jolen Galaugher
- Lindsay Gillanders
- Tom Rhodes
- Steven Bennett

Staff

- Anne Lindsey
Executive Director
- Jen Buhr
Operations Manager
- Christa Campbell
Development & Communications Manager
- Erika Frey Morote followed by Josh Derbecker
Social Purchasing Portal
- Jewel Pierre-Roscelli
Practicum Student

