

2009 Council of the Federation Literacy Award Recipient

Ken Steele of Edmonton, a writer and ambassador for literacy, is Alberta's 2009 recipient of the Council of the Federation Literacy Award. In the words of the Premier, the Honourable Ed Stelmach, "Across Alberta, remarkable adults have been making positive changes in their lives and inspiring others by improving their levels of literacy". Mr. Steele exemplifies this and has contributed to the advancement of literacy in Alberta.

A literacy instructor at The Learning Centre Literacy Association wrote: "When Ken first came to our program he felt he could not write. Since that time he has had 3 books of short stories and poetry published by the Learning at the Centre Press, wherein he expresses life experiences, thoughts and feelings. Because of his positive attitude and the success that he has achieved he is a very good role model for other participants in the program. He also actively encourages others. Ken has a wonderful openness to learning as he strives to improve his abilities and as he simply enjoys the creative process of writing".

Ken's involvement with a network of 17 agencies in northeast Edmonton has helped create literacy friendly organizations. An executive director of a youth organization wrote on behalf of the Northeast Edmonton Literacy Network about Ken's participation laying the foundation for their work. "Ken has described for us in detail ...the embarrassment and fear of living with the fact that he struggled to read and write. The personal stories and experiences that he shared were made yet more inspiring by the humble, gentle and genuine ways in which he presented them. Ken's willingness to talk about his story provided the impetus for us as a network to explore ways to reduce barriers for individuals accessing our programs".