



Charity: Literature for Life
7 Labatt Ave.,
Toronto, ON
M5A 1Z1
416 203 9830

Charitable #: 89431 8617RR0001

Project: Boys with Books, Recognize the Real

Project Presenter: Jo Altilia, Executive Director, Literature for Life

Sponsor: Dan Gallo

The project supported by The Funding Network-Toronto was highly successful. Thank you.

12 adolescent boys between the ages of 14-16 enthusiastically attended weekly reading circle meetings at Driftwood Community Centre. The meetings were held on Sunday afternoons between 1 and 3. The youth who attended are interested in resuming the group. We are investigating long term funding opportunities to continue the program to support the work of Recognize the Real.

Our budget for the project indicated that we would hire one facilitator for \$30 per hour. During the process of recruiting a facilitator, I was introduced to Jibola Fagbamiye and Ian Fleming who are the co-writers and designers of the graphic novel Dante. Both men are university graduates, starting their careers as professionals. They are positive role male role models and reflect the cultural and racial background of most of the participants. They agreed to share the fee of \$30 per hour. Together they engaged the group not only in reading graphic novels, including Dante, Afro Samurai, Sandman, V for Vendetta and Watchmen., but also in the task of writing their own graphic novel.

The focus of the project was to develop reading skills, analyzing plots and story construction. To further engage the participants, Mr. Fagbamiye held a seminar on drawing elements and character design. Each participant was given a set of drawing materials. Mr. Fleming held a seminar on plot and character development. We are in the planning stage to publish their group graphic novel for distribution at Driftwood Community Centre.

We gained some important learning with respect to the challenges of working with 'at risk' male youth living in this neighbourhood. We learned that it is important to work hard and fast with the youth to ensure that participants did not lose focus. Neighbourhood issues of violence and home circumstances occasionally caused some individuals to miss a week or two which created some inconsistencies in the discussion. However, peer pressure was strong with this group and it should be noted that individuals usually returned to the group.

7 Labatt Avenue, #207, Toronto, ON M5A 1Z1
Phone 416 203 9830 Fax 416 203 2597
E-Mail: jaltilia@literatureforlife.org
<http://www.literatureforlife.org>
Charitable # 89431 8617RR0001

Literature for Life and Recognize the Real extend our sincere thank you to The Funding Network-Toronto for supporting this project. It was successful and has provided the organizations with the template to repeat the reading circle as a critical component to Recognize the Real's Life Skills program.

Sincerely,

Jo Altilia
Founder and Executive Director

