

## **Overview - Moncton Scottish Rite Dyslexic Learning Center:**

Dyslexia is a genetic learning difficulty that affects 15% of the population and severely limits the ability to read and thus learn. Children become frustrated and lose interest as well as being embarrassed and feeling stupid which can result in a low sense of self-worth. On the other hand, Dyslexic children typically have above average IQ and are more creative.

The Scottish Rite, similar to the Shriners, is a branch of Masonry; a worldwide fraternal organization with over 1 million members whose charitable activities focus on the needs of children. The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation has made their mission solving the puzzles of the mind (Dyslexia, ADHD, Alzheimer's, Autism) and donates \$500,000 in Canada annually for research in these areas.

Our Dyslexic learning Centers for children are an offshoot of this focus. More than 50 years ago some masons in Colorado thought of a way they could help dyslexic children access the Orton-Gillingham training method. Since then, masons throughout North America have taken up this cause in 210 locations which annually graduate thousands of dyslexic children. All Centers are operated independently by the volunteer efforts of local Scottish Rite Masons and financed entirely through their fundraising activities and donations from local businesses and charities.

The centers' lifeblood is locating and training volunteer tutors which constitutes 40% of our expenses. This rigorous training in the recognized "Gold Standard" Orton-Gillingham method is an ongoing expense that will only increase as the number of students entering the program increases. The operating model includes no cost, twice weekly, one hour sessions of one on one tutoring, during the school year.

Our greatest challenge will always be to promote donations by relating the very positive effect we are having on children's lives as well as conducting fundraising events.

For the past 8 years, donations from within the Masonic community in NB & PEI have enabled us to: establish a facility in Riverview to accommodate 50 students, support the operating costs throughout the 6 year start-up phase, and hire a part time center administrator/tutor.

Progress to date includes: 13 graduates, 21 currently enrolled, 40 on waiting list with 19 volunteer tutors (local school teachers)

Impact on the students is profound. Examples: Marissa entered program C-grade and 3 years later is A+ and leading her class; William improved his reading ability 11 levels in 2 years, without which, post-secondary education would not be possible.

We are now at the point where we must ask the community for help in shouldering further responsibility for this program which can profoundly change the lives of some of our brightest and most creative children, which in turn will compound their future growth and provide a beneficial impact on society.

Specifically, our ongoing tutor training costs, which reflect a modest growth rate of 7 students and tutor attrition, are projected at \$24,000 for fiscal year 2019.

In summary, at this point, the number of children we can help overcome this reading difficulty is only limited by the number of tutors we can train.