



# *Creating Futures*

---

South Slave Divisional Education Council %PO Box 819 %Fort Smith, NT %X0E 0P0 %Ph: (867) 872-7210 %Fax: (867) 872-2150

## **News Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 2, 2003**

### ***South Slave Divisional Education Council Honored with Ministerial Literacy Award***

Fort Smith, NT – The South Slave Divisional Education Council’s (SSDEC) Literacy Project Committee’s contribution to literacy in the Northwest Territories has been recognized with the 2002-03 Ministerial Literacy Award by the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Jake Ootes. The award is presented annually to individuals and organizations who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to improving literacy.

According to Michelle Sabeau, the Council’s Literacy Coordinator, improving literacy levels in South Slave schools and communities has been a concerted team effort since the project’s inception. “I am very proud that the continued dedication, commitment, enthusiasm, and knowledge of the committee members, both past and present, have been recognized with such a distinguished award. All our teachers, staff, students, and parents share in this award and the successes we have achieved together”, notes Sabeau.

Innovation and partnerships are defining elements in the Literacy Project’s pre-school literacy development and family literacy initiatives. In partnership with Public Health the committee launched a Baby Bag program for all new mothers in South Slave Communities, and a novel Literacy Bag campaign for 4-5 year olds who attend Kindergarten screening. Partnering with families and schools has extended through the K-3 Rufus’ Reading Club and Home Reading Programs.

For Mary Bourque, Literacy Project Committee Member and teacher at JBT School in Fort Smith, the Literacy Project is making a difference. “Every year we see a difference. Teachers are working together, and students are more interested in reading and love reading in their spare time”, states Bourque.

The Ministerial Literacy Awards will be presented on June 17<sup>th</sup>, in Yellowknife at a function hosted by Minister Ootes in the Great Hall of the Legislative Assembly.

**-30-**

*For more information contact Brian Leadbetter, South Slave Divisional Education Council, (867) 872-7216 or [brian\\_leadbetter@southslave.learnnet.nt.ca](mailto:brian_leadbetter@southslave.learnnet.nt.ca)*