

THE CODE READER

YOUR GIFTS IN ACTION

A NEW YEAR – GREATER IMPACT

To echo our students in Ghana above,
Happy New Year!

As we look ahead in 2018, I feel fortunate to reflect on the year just ended and to thank you for all of your support in what we were able to accomplish. Because of you, CODE not only continues to see progress in supporting the development of literacy and learning at the individual school, library, teacher and student levels, but is also succeeding in affecting systemic change. From our on-going program in supporting the transformation of teacher-education in Mozambique (BETTER) to a national teacher-

training initiative (REDiSL) in Sierra Leone, CODE is managing to amplify exponentially the ripple effect of its impact. This is all possible thanks to the thoughtful support of people like you.

I hope you are encouraged by the results you are helping us realize through the stories, articles and statistics that follow.

Thank you very much.



Scott Walter, Executive Director, CODE



GIRLS IN THE “RIGHT” GRADE

Last year, CODE's program in Liberia piloted an initiative to support over-age female students to accelerate their learning so that they could be advanced to an age appropriate grade. The Girls Accelerated Learning Initiative was introduced in five schools, and we are already seeing some success thanks to your generous support.

This past academic year, all of the overage girls in grades 1-3 (a total of 173) were included in this innovative program. We're excited to share that the program has proven successful and we're implementing it again this year! Of the 173 girls in the program last year, 145 were promoted to the next grade level, 6 were promoted two grades ahead and 7 were retained in the same grade.

This year, each teacher will work closely with 10 overage girls in order to adequately address their reading challenges and improve their grades for promotion at the end of the first semester.

The students are bonding with the teachers while they focus on reinforcing reading, writing, math, health and hygiene relating to girls.

Having girls in the right grade benefits everyone, as educated girls and women tend to be healthier, have fewer children, earn more income and are able to better provide for their families and contribute to their communities.





*A literary award
like no other.*

CELEBRATING THE CODE BURT AWARD FOR FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND MÉTIS YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

It has been a busy few months at CODE for the Burt Award team with award ceremonies, author tours, and launching the **#ReadWithMe** campaign.

The CODE Burt Literary Awards continue to foster a love of reading amongst young adults in Africa, the Caribbean and in Canada. This past November, the amiskwaciy Academy (an Indigenous high school)

in Edmonton hosted the 2017 Burt Award for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis (FNIM) Young Adult Literature. Over 200 students and 20 special guests attended the ceremony. We're grateful to our hosts, Shelagh Rogers, previous award-winning author Patti LaBoucane-Benson, and our Reading Champion in Canada - Ian Campeau (founding member of a Tribe Called Red). The award ceremony was an energetic and joyful event, starting

and ending with a beautiful drum song and prayer. There was also a photo booth for students to participate in the **#ReadWithMe** campaign, a book give-away, author signings, the most delicious community feast (stew, bannock, local fish, salad, sweets) all prepared by the elders, and lots of prizes. Everyone was eager for more and truly enjoyed being part of this incredible event!

To read more: burtaward.org

“Reading forces you to be open-minded because you're constantly confronting ideas that came from someone else's mind. That open-mindedness gives you a curiosity for life.” - Elshadai Tesfaye, Burt Award winning author (Ethiopia)

CODE BURT AWARD FOR YOUNG ADULT AFRICAN LITERATURE

In September, NBDCK (National Book Development Council of Kenya) hosted the first ever CODE Burt Award Ceremony for Africa All-Stars. Authors from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, and Tanzania competed for the All-Star prize and the five winners were honoured at an award ceremony in Nairobi. Burt Award authors also took the time to visit schools and meet with youth, teachers, and librarians at the StoryMoja Reading Festival. The festival had over 250 young people interacting with the authors and CODE launched the **#ReadWithMe** campaign with its first Reading Champions!



CODE BURT AWARD FOR YOUNG ADULT CARIBBEAN LITERATURE

In the Caribbean, four Burt Award authors traveled to Trinidad and Tobago in mid-November for a five-day whirlwind tour. They visited schools, libraries, book clubs, and community centres all across the island. They participated in The National Secondary Schools Spoken Word Intercol Launch as competition judges. The authors also met and interacted with over 500 students -promoting reading, supporting teachers, librarians and book clubs, and loved sharing their books and stories.



THE LEGACY OF A VISIONARY PHILANTHROPIST

On October 16th, 2017 CODE lost a dear friend. William (Bill) Burt, the visionary behind the literary award, which bears his name, passed away after a long and courageous battle with cancer.

Upon learning about CODE and its work through a newspaper article, Bill began to support its programming of literacy and education in the developing world. Having been fortunate to benefit from Bill's generosity for years since that time, it was during a CODE organized travel experience named Seeing is Believing to Ethiopia that truly ignited his desire to do more.

Standing beside an almost empty bookcase in the back of a rural library in Ethiopia, he noticed something curiously interesting. Amongst the very few books on the shelves was one book, which was obviously well read. He took the book and asked the librarian why of the few books in the library was this one seemingly so loved. He learned that it was the only book that really appealed to youth. He could relate. He often shared that his own love of reading was sparked by the Hardy Boys. Books that appealed to him as a boy.

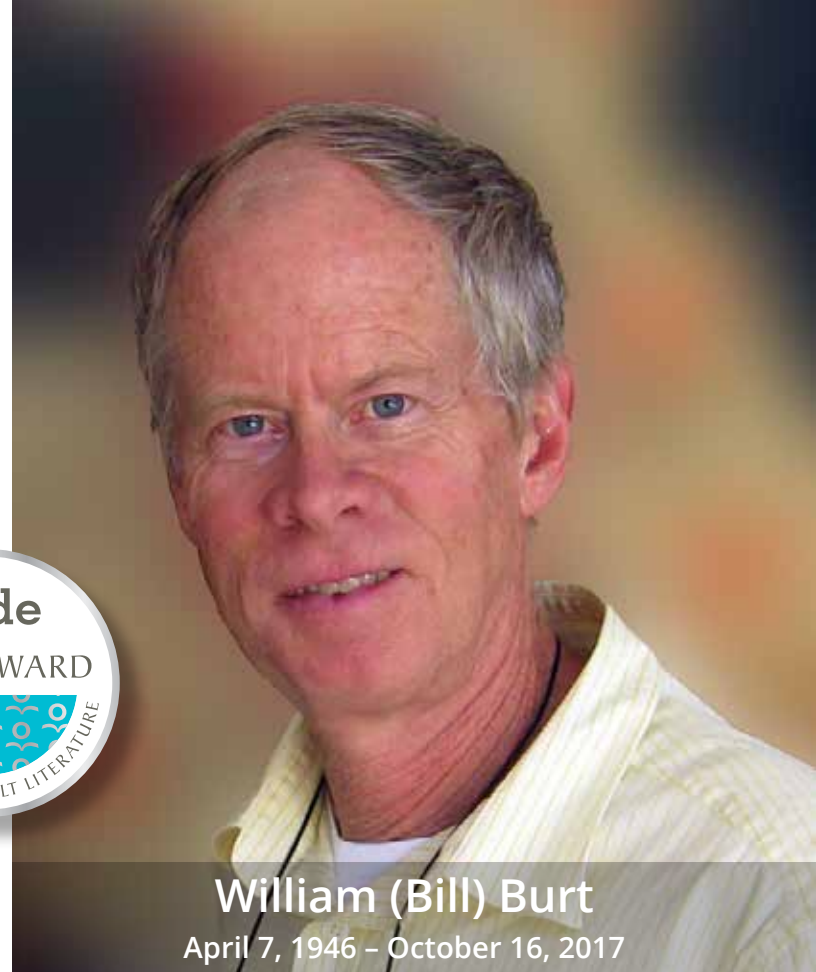
He envisioned a program that would capture the imagination of youth by nurturing a love of reading. As a result, it could also serve to strengthen their literacy. He turned to CODE to help make it happen.

The program encourages local authors to write fiction for youth. It recognizes and celebrates the best-judged authors' titles every year with generous monetary awards. Yet, it is a literary award like no other. The program, also purchases large quantities of these award-winning books and distributes them to schools and libraries – making them accessible and important in developing stronger literacy skills.

Since the introduction of the "Burt Prize" (as it was affectionately referred to by Bill) in Tanzania in 2007, the program has benefitted hundreds of thousands of youth in four African countries, the Caribbean as well as here in Canada amongst First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

Bill was a humble and exceptionally thoughtful philanthropist. He regularly challenged CODE to ensure that the impact of the program would be as far-reaching as possible. **It was all about getting these books into the hands of young people who would most greatly benefit from them.** We already miss our friend but we will work diligently to steward his legacy alongside his family.

In honouring Bill, CODE continues to accept donations that will contribute to his legacy. Visit our website to learn more: code.ngo



William (Bill) Burt

April 7, 1946 – October 16, 2017

Thanks to Bill, since 2008

1,401 local writers and editors trained in 55 workshops in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania and the Caribbean.

89 titles received the Burt Award, of which **13** are approved for use in national education curricula participating African countries.

227,176 copies of Burt Award books donated to schools, libraries, community centres, and other charitable organizations in Canada, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, and the Caribbean.

177,226 copies of Burt Award winning titles reportedly sold independently by their publishers.





5,300
teachers trained
in Sierra Leone
through the
REDiSL
initiative

TRAINING TEACHERS FOR A NATION

In May 2017, CODE was chosen by Sierra Leone's Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) to launch a critically needed, nation-wide teacher-training initiative designed to revitalize education in Sierra Leone (REDiSL).

CODE has been working in Sierra Leone since 2011 - delivering its comprehensive readership program Reading Sierra Leone 20/20 to thousands of young learners. It supports literate environments through the creation of locally produced, culturally meaningful story books in collaboration with its local partner PEN-SL. It also leads professional development teacher training opportunities in partnership with local partner The Association of Language and Literacy Educators (TALLE) in order for teachers to improve their knowledge, skills and strategies to become more effective in the classroom in the teaching of reading and writing.

REDiSL is a wonderful addition to an already comprehensive program. With funding provided by the World Bank and the Global Partnership for Education

(GPE), 4,400 primary school teachers as well as 900 primary school head teachers, school inspectors and supervisors were trained to support the development of children's literacy.

Students who do not learn to read during their early primary schooling, struggle to learn in the years afterwards. Not only do they struggle in the acquisition of literacy and language skills, they are unable to access science, literature, math, or social studies. As you know, literacy skills lead to an educated population, which ultimately allows the population to thrive. REDiSL has laid the groundwork for productive learning to help nurture a more literate population.

“Equipping teachers to work independently well with the essentials of meaningful classroom instruction is vital in promoting a sustainable quality education.”

– Alhajie Sallieu Kanu, TALLE Program Manager

CODE INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED

In November, CODE was honoured by the Library of Congress at an awards event in Washington, D.C. for its implementation of Best Practices in Literacy Promotion.

We are truly grateful for this honour and for being recognized with other literacy organization, working tirelessly to ensure that every child has a future starting with education.

The Library of Congress is the world's largest library, offering access to the creative record of the United States - and extensive materials from around the world—both on-site and online. The Library of Congress Literacy Awards originated by philanthropist David M. Rubenstein in 2013, honours organizations working to promote literacy and reading in the United States and worldwide. The awards recognize groups doing exemplary, innovative and replicable work, and they spotlight the need for the global community to unite in striving for universal literacy.



“Literacy is the first line of defense against so many problems - unemployment, hunger, poor health - and gives people a foundation for a brighter future.”

– Carla Hayden, Librarian of Congress



SHARE YOUR LOVE OF READING AND WIN!

WANT TO BECOME A READING CHAMPION? IT'S EASY.

Pick one (or more) of the options below and send us your post. We'll share your content on our website, and social media channels and have our celebrity reading champions share your post with their network(s) too!

We will be making a draw at the end of March 2018 to choose three of the best reading champion submissions to win one of three great prizes!

Tag CODE's Burt Award social media accounts: [@CODEBurtAwards](#) [#ReadWithMe](#) to participate in the campaign.

[#ReadWithMe](#) is CODE's reading promotion campaign designed to promote the love and habit of reading by providing encouragement and inspiration.

Options:

1. Tag your post [@CODEBurtAwards](#) with [#ReadWithMe](#)
2. Take a photo holding a book. You can take individual photos or group photos.
3. Take a photo and write a few sentences explaining why you are a reader and why reading is important to you.
4. Create a short video (using your phone or a camera). Use one of these questions to guide the content of your video. Why is reading important to you? What book do you want people to "Read with You"?
5. Set up a reading club and share the books you choose.
6. Organize an author visit or invite a reading champion to your school or library.

To learn more: www.burtaward.org/read-with-me

In 2016-17
OVER 100,000
BOOKS found
their way
into the
hands of
OVER 800,000
CHILDREN
thanks to you!





SUPPORT A PLACE TO READ - ADOPT A LIBRARY!

A library represents many things. It is a place to access information. A place to learn. A place to expand knowledge. A place to reach beyond one's own world. However, in many parts of the developing world, libraries are few and far between.

Last Fall, CODE identified libraries available for "adoption" in Sierra Leone and Liberia during our 2017-18 program year. You can provide a school, and in many cases an entire community, with a place to learn for about \$200 a month through the **Adopt-A-Library** program.

Visit code.ngo to learn more about how you can create a safe and welcoming place to learn by putting books and learning resources into the hands of young children.

GUIDING LITERACY PRACTICE: CONTEXT MATTERS

Research on literacy in general and reading, in particular, has been largely carried out in high-income countries and contexts, and generalized to low-income countries and contexts. The "Context Matters" research initiative CODE initiated last year aims to help address this problematic knowledge flow from North to South by supporting meaningful literacy research in countries in which CODE works. To begin the conversation, CODE commissioned two landscape literature reviews to inform the way forward:

Girls' Empowerment through Language and Literacy (GELL): A Landscape Review of Gender and Literacy Research in African Contexts undertaken in collaboration with McGill University

This review has two broad objectives: 1) to present an overview of literature in the area of gender and literacy, with a specific focus on African contexts; and 2) to identify possible directions for research to inform CODE activities. It shows there is a paucity of research when it comes to specific pedagogical questions regarding gender and what works to support and strengthen different literacy practices of girls and boys in various contexts and thus exists an important opportunity for establishing a meaningful gender and literacy research agenda.

Africa Language and Literacy: A Landscape Review of Language and Literacy Research in African Contexts undertaken in collaboration with the University of British Columbia

This report addresses key issues based on recent research on language and literacy education in the African context, including teacher education. Quality education is a priority and twenty-first century skills, such as active learning, problem solving, critical thinking, independent thinking, and ICT skills, are key. Although these skills are often mentioned in the policy documents, there is need for more research on how these can be implemented in practice.

To read more, visit code.ngo.



CODE's research, Context Matters, further empowers it as a thought leader in its practice.

Scott Walter
Executive Director
CODE



Thousands
of books are
in the hands
of students
thanks to
Asanko!

INCREASING CODE'S REACH AND IMPACT IN GHANA

In November, CODE's Director for International Programs, Hila Olyan, travelled to Ghana to participate in the launch of the Reading Ghana program in the Assasie district of the Ashanti Region (following from its previous launch in Amansie West). The event was organized and hosted by its generous funding partner in Ghana, Asanko Gold. The event was attended by several Chiefs from surrounding villages, key representatives from the Ministry of Education's District office as well as CODE's local partner, the Ghana Book Trust – and of course, teachers and students from program schools.

This second region encompasses 8 new schools which are in addition to the existing 10 schools already participating in the program. Activities include Head Teacher training, teacher training, library management as well as the distribution of thousands of books and learning materials.

ADDRESSING A HARD TRUTH THROUGH LITERACY

As we have seen in recent months, many cases of sexual harassment have pervaded the developed world; it is also part of everyday life in developing countries. In Mozambique, addressing sexual harassment has been a longstanding challenge.

CODE, in collaboration with its local partner Associacio Progresso, has supported the publication of books addressing sexual harassment in order to educate students about their rights as well as the rights of their teachers. Gender equality, safety and equitable opportunities for all is an important part of CODE's program and belief system, and a big part of the reason we hope to influence change in Mozambique.

To witness our work firsthand related to this important topic, you can visit code.ngo to see a video of a reading competition that took place this past June. A young student teacher is reading from the book about sexual harassment that was published as part of our previous program, Promotion of a Literate Environment in Mozambique II (2008-2014).

While we appreciate this may be a topic you haven't seen us discuss before, we are steadfast in our belief that it is critically important to ensure that students are educated in an environment that is safe, equitable, and allows them to thrive and dream of a brighter future. Thank you for making a difference with your support of CODE and helping us work towards meaningful social change.

A student teacher reading from a book CODE published as part of its program in Mozambique.



CODE AIMS TO CONQUER KILIMANJARO FOR ITS 4TH TIME

In July 2018, CODE will once again benefit from the exceptional leadership and initiative of Chris Brecht, a former Chair of CODE's Board of Directors and currently a Director of its Foundation. Many may be unaware but Chris has led CODE's three previous climbs in 2006, 2010 and 2014 and has helped to raise and leverage over \$2 million in support of literacy and learning! During the first week of July 2018, Chris will once again lead an intrepid group of climbers in their ascent to the Summit while raising funds for CODE.

Should you be interested in an experience of a lifetime, feel free to contact Allen LeBlanc, Director for Fund Development & Marketing at CODE at 613.232.3569 ext 232 or email directly to kili@code.ngo for more information.



Over \$2 million has been raised in support of literacy and learning!



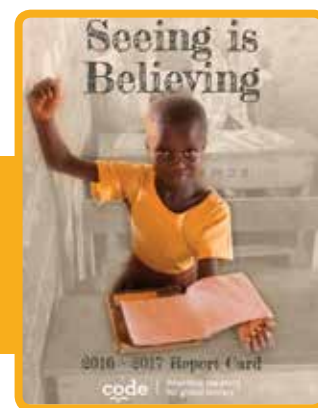
Afreenish Yusirah manning the table at Carleton U's book drive.

SPECIAL THANKS TO CODE ON CAMPUS CARLETON U

Carleton U's CODE on Campus club is full swing into the year raising money and sharing their love of books. Many thanks for their book drive and other events to support CODE's work! Follow their Facebook group and get involved -

 [/CODEonCampusCU/](https://www.facebook.com/CODEonCampusCU/)

CODE on Campus is a network of university and college students committed to taking simple effective steps to improve literacy rates around the world. These clubs are set up on Canadian university and college campuses, and members organize awareness-raising, advocacy, and fundraising initiatives on our behalf. By sharing information about CODE, our programs, and global literacy issues, CODE on Campus groups help create a new generation of literacy advocates. Find out how you can get involved - code.ngo



CODE's 2016-17 Report Card now available online!

We invite you to review our 2017 *Report Card* on-line at code.ngo/reports or contact donor.donateur@code.ngo for a print version.

Looking for other ways to support and stay engaged with CODE? Visit our website and sign up for our e-newsletter and other updates. "Like" us on Facebook and help share our story. Or, follow us on Twitter to get daily updates on our work. Thank you!

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