



Braille Literacy Canada commemorates World Braille Day and ushers in new initiatives to celebrate BLC's 30th anniversary

(TORONTO, ON, January 4, 2020) --- In celebration of World Braille Day, commemorating the birth of Louis Braille whose system of tactile reading and writing brought literacy to those who are blind, Braille Literacy Canada is unveiling the launch of the *Braille Zoomers* group – a new initiative that will provide peer-support, information and resources to adults and seniors with sight loss who pursue braille training in Canada.

“Reading-related difficulties are among the most common reasons for referral to sight loss rehabilitation services. With the prevalence of sight loss expected to double by 2050, there is a growing need to support adults and seniors who pursue braille instruction to regain their independence,” explains President Natalie Martiniello.

The *Braille Zoomers* group will provide adult braille learners – both those learning and those who have completed learning – with a virtual platform to come together to provide and receive peer-support and mentorship, share tips, resources and experiences related to learning braille in adulthood. In future, BLC also hopes to provide braille starter kits to adult learners containing items to support their braille learning and independence, such as braille reading materials for adults and labeling tools. As Martiniello explains, “Even with the proliferation of technology, braille provides Canadians who are blind with a means to read household labels, make lists and engage in leisure reading, and functions as a bridge between vision and sight loss to maintain spelling and other writing skills.”

The *Braille Zoomers* group is one of several new initiatives that Braille Literacy Canada will undertake during 2020 (which marks the organization's 30th anniversary) to promote the use of braille for Canadians who benefit from it. In May, the organization will celebrate its anniversary year during a special Annual General Meeting and reception to take place in conjunction with the Canadian Vision Teachers conference.

Individuals who wish to learn more about the Braille Zoomers group, or the upcoming 30th anniversary celebrations can write to info@blc-lbc.ca or call Braille Literacy Canada at 1-877-861-4576.

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Braille Literacy Canada / Litt ratie braille Canada, founded in 1990 as the Canadian Braille Authority, is a national charitable organization dedicated to the promotion of braille as the primary medium of literacy for those who are blind or visually impaired. BLC is recognized by the International Council on English Braille as the authority for the development, adoption, and establishment of standards relating to braille in Canada. With a membership comprising organizations and individuals, educators, braille transcribers, braille producers, parents of braille users and braille users themselves, BLC represents a broad cross-section of those working with or impacted by braille and is lead by a volunteer board of directors elected by the BLC membership.

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