

NORLIEN FOUNDATION



Ms. Nancy Mannix, of the Norlien Foundation (right) receives the CEECD Medal from Dr. Margaret Clarke, of The Fraser Mustard Chair in Child Development (left).

“There is a pressing need to find better ways to deliver comprehensive services to children and their parents.”

Dr. David Elton,
President of the Norlien Foundation

Since its creation in 1998, the Norlien Foundation has played an important role in establishing local and provincial early childhood development strategies. One of its major program areas is family well-being. With its Family Wellness Strategy, the Foundation works to support major initiatives that contribute to the well-being of Albertans. By supporting projects such as the One World Child Development Centre and programs that encourage healthy prenatal development and the prevention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, the Foundation works to help vulnerable children and families.

“We are honoured to be part of a growing group of individuals and organizations that are identifying innovative approaches to improving the quality of life for children, regardless of their circumstance,” said Norlien Foundation President Dr. David Elton. *“Demonstration projects such as the Calgary Urban Project Society One World Child Development Centre give all of us an opportunity to put into practice holistic approaches to early childhood development.”* Located in Alberta, this early intervention education centre operates with the philosophy of providing a nurturing, caring, educational environment to help children and families reach their full potential. Its services include preschool and kindergarten, parent education, drop-in childcare, family support and counselling, nutritional meals, and health care.

In 2006, the Norlien Foundation created the Fraser Mustard Chair in Child Development at the University of Calgary. The goals of this new chair are to help develop world-class interdisciplinary research in the field of childhood development, to promote collaboration between programs and services, to attract graduate students in the field and to develop community outreach initiatives.

THE ALBERTA HERITAGE FOUNDATION FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH



Ms. Gail Surkan, from The Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research (AHFMR) receives the CEECD Medal from Mr. Richard E. Tremblay, CEECD Director.

“Ensuring every baby has a healthy start in life is a global priority.”

Dr. Kevin Keough,
President and CEO of the Alberta Heritage
Foundation for Medical Research

Established by the Government of Alberta in 1980, the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research (AHFMR) supports a community of researchers who generate knowledge, with a goal to improve the health and quality of life of Albertans and people throughout the world. Its long-term commitment is to fund health research based on international standards of excellence and carried out by new and established investigators and researchers in training.

Over the years, the AHFMR has provided funding for many investigators involved in early childhood research. Its outstanding support and proactive initiatives have shown its dedication to improve knowledge and collaboration in this field.

One such initiative was the 2005 Inukshuk Conference, a first-time event that brought health researchers, philanthropists, social scientists and policy-makers from around the world to Alberta to discuss a wide range of factors contributing to the optimal health of fetal and childhood development. Conference participants heard presentations on fetal origins of disease, social and economic determinants of health, the health and social well-being of Australia's aboriginal children, physical aggression during early childhood, and economic arguments for investing in children. The interdisciplinary nature of the conference created an exceptional opportunity for participants to build contacts outside their own areas of focus, and to develop a more comprehensive understanding of early-childhood health.

“The Inukshuk Conference was a high point in our 25 years of research and experience,” said Dr. Kevin Keough, AHFMR President and CEO. *“We look forward to greater strengths in this area provincially in terms of research and policy-making.”*

PHOTOS: DIRK FONTAINE