



RURAL ONTARIO  
INSTITUTE



# Vision, Voice and Leadership

2011-2012  
ANNUAL  
REPORT



# RURAL ONTARIO INSTITUTE

Vision, Voice and Leadership

This annual report is also available online at:

[www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca](http://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca)

Charitable Registration No. 86275 2052 RR0001

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# Annual Report 2011-2012

The vision of the *Rural Ontario Institute (ROI)* is: **Building Vision, Voice and Leadership for a strong and vibrant rural Ontario.**

To achieve this goal, ROI has a mission of: **Developing leaders, initiating dialogue, supporting collaboration and promoting action on issues and opportunities facing rural Ontario.**

## **Key Values**

*We value and encourage:*

- Diverse perspectives and collaboration
- Respectful, open and honest communication
- Innovation and entrepreneurship
- Economic, social and environmental sustainability in rural Ontario
- Continuous improvement and excellence

## **Key Result Areas**

- Strong leaders, strong organizations and strong rural communities
- Effective facilitation of dialogue and collaboration on rural issues and opportunities
- An effective Rural Ontario Institute

Looking forward, the *Rural Ontario Institute* will continue to embark on initiatives that build strong rural leaders and represent the critical rural voice on issues of importance to rural Ontario.

This annual report contains a summary of the work undertaken over the past year.

# Board of Directors



**JIM WHALEY**  
(Chair)  
Wasaga Beach, ON



**ROB HANNAM**  
(Vice Chair/Treasurer)  
Guelph, ON



**STIG PUSCHEL**  
(Secretary)  
Sudbury, ON



**BILL BEARSS**  
Brampton, ON



**JULIE CAYLEY\***  
Barrie, ON



**CRAIG DESJARDINS**  
Picton, ON



**CHRISTINE DUKELOW**  
Beaverton, ON



**Dr. ROB GORDON**  
Guelph, ON



**JANET HORNER**  
Shelburne, ON



**SCOTT MERRIFIELD**  
Sudbury, ON



**CATHY REDDEN**  
Campbellford, ON



**CHRIS WHITE**  
Rockwood, ON

## Staff



**ROB BLACK**  
Chief Executive  
Officer



**ALICIA EVANS**  
Project Manager  
Leadership Programs



**MICHELE HILL**  
Office Manager



**KATHIE MACDONALD**  
Communications Manager/  
AALP Coordinator



**DENISE MOUTER**  
Administrative  
Assistant



**NORMAN RAGETLIE**  
Director, Policy and  
Stakeholder  
Engagement



**RICK UPFOLD**  
AALP Curriculum  
Advisor

## AALP Advisory Committee

- **Dan Wright\***, (Chair), Monsanto Canada Inc. & AALP Class 10
- **Rick Upfold**, Curriculum Advisor
- **Sara Avoledo\***, Annex Business Media & AALP Class 12
- **Clinton Buttar\***, Farm Credit Canada & AALP Class 13
- **Steve Cooper\***, Coopers Goat and Veggy Farm & AALP Class 11
- **Matt Langford\***, Langford Insurance & AALP Class 13
- **Brad Lichty\***, AGDATA Ltd. & AALP Class 12
- **Carol Maki\***, AALP Class 13
- **Kathryn Minten\***, Minten Dairy Farms & AALP Class 13
- **Jelena Payne**, OMAFRA
- **Nathan Stevens\***, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario & AALP Class 12
- **Teresa Van Raay\***, Van Raay Farms & AALP Class 9
- **Rob Black**, ROI Chief Executive Officer
- **Kathie MacDonald**, ROI Communications Manager/AALP Coordinator

\*indicates AALP graduate

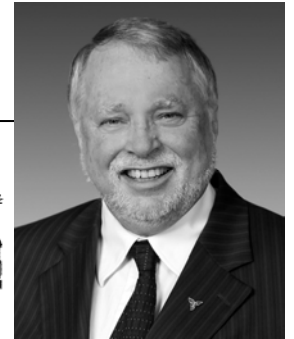
# Message from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Ministry of Agriculture,  
Food and Rural Affairs

Ministère de l'Agriculture,  
de l'Alimentation et  
des Affaires rurales

Office of the Minister  
77 Grenville Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1B3  
Tel: (416) 326-3074  
Fax: (416) 326-3083

Bureau du ministre  
77, rue Grenville, 11<sup>e</sup> étage  
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1B3  
Tél. : (416) 326-3074  
Télééc. : (416) 326-3083



## A Message from the Honourable Ted McMeekin

I am very pleased to contribute a message to the Rural Ontario Institute's 2011–12 Annual Report.

I want to begin by congratulating your organization on another successful year. Your hard work and accomplishments are helping to develop leaders for our agricultural sector and rural community organizations. I appreciate the special role that your organization plays to connect rural stakeholders and community leaders on the issues that matter to rural Ontarians.

One example of your organization's success over the past year is the Community Attractiveness Indicators for Newcomers Partnership Project. I understand that this work involved extensive collaboration with a broad range of stakeholders, including my ministry. As a result of this important work, rural communities have a tool to help assess their capacity in attracting and retaining the human capital needed for their business expansion and for economic viability.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs is proud to support the Rural Ontario Institute's work in leadership skills and organizational development. This funding enables the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) to continue operating as a highly regarded leadership development program.

I wish you all the best in the year ahead. Keep up the great work!

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ted McMeekin'.

Ted McMeekin  
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Ministry Headquarters: 1 Stone Road West, Guelph, Ontario N1G 4Y2  
Bureau principal du ministère: 1 Stone Road West, Guelph (Ontario) N1G 4Y2

Good Things Grow in Ontario  
À bonne terre, bons produits



# Message from the Chair and the Chief Executive Officer

As the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) wraps up its second year of operations it is readily apparent that the work being done by our organization touches many aspects of rural Ontario. Over the past twelve months our initiatives have contributed to and supported rural and agricultural leaders and presented a critical rural voice on issues of importance to a strong, healthy and vibrant rural Ontario.

Since our last Annual Report, the Board and staff of ROI have advanced the organization within three key result areas. Our work **supports strong leaders, strong organizations and strong rural communities**. It **provides for effective facilitation of dialogue and collaboration on rural issues and opportunities**. Finally, as an effective rural organization ROI continues to **model the way and 'walk the talk' in organization best practices**.

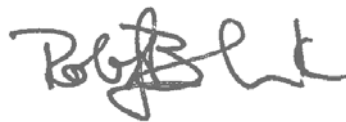
As is always the case, we could not have undertaken our work this year without the strong financial support and backing of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and our many program partners, sponsors and friends of the organization. Our sincere thanks to all who have supported ROI and our programming efforts, financially and otherwise in the past fiscal year. Their ongoing support and contributions have ensured a successful second year as an organization.

The significant and dedicated efforts of the Board of Directors and various committee members and staff have not gone unnoticed. These hard working individuals go above and beyond to ensure the organization is at the forefront in all that we do in rural Ontario. We value the time and opportunity we have to interact with them and the many stakeholders, program participants and alumni of our programs who remain dedicated and committed to building Vision, Voice and Leadership for a strong and vibrant rural Ontario. Thank you for all you do for rural Ontario!

Excitement abounds about the opportunities that exist for rural Ontario and for the Rural Ontario Institute. In the past 12 months we have accomplished a great deal and moved our 'internal and external yardsticks' forward. At the same time, we look forward to the future with optimism knowing that our organization is committed to a progressive mission and mandate. We are confident that, working together with others in rural Ontario, we can accomplish great things.



Jim Whaley  
Chair  
Rural Ontario Institute



Rob Black  
Chief Executive Officer  
Rural Ontario Institute

# Auditors' Report



Chartered Accountants  
and Business Advisors

People Count.

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors of: Rural Ontario Institute

### Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Rural Ontario Institute, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2012 and the statements of operations and changes in net assets - general fund and operations and changes in net assets - restricted funds and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained in our audit is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our qualified audit opinion.

### Qualified Opinion

In common with many non-profit organizations, the Rural Ontario Institute derives revenue from the general public in the form of donations, memberships, programming and other fees, the completeness of which is not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, our verification of these revenues was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the Rural Ontario Institute and we were not able to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to excess of revenue over expenditures, assets and fund balances.

In our opinion, except for the effect of the adjustments, if any, which we might have determined to be necessary had we been able to satisfy ourselves concerning the completeness of the revenue sources referred to in the preceding paragraph, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Rural Ontario Institute as at March 31, 2012 and the results of its operations and the changes in its financial position for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Guelph, Ontario  
June 19, 2012

*RLB LLP*  
Chartered Accountants  
Licensed Public Accountants

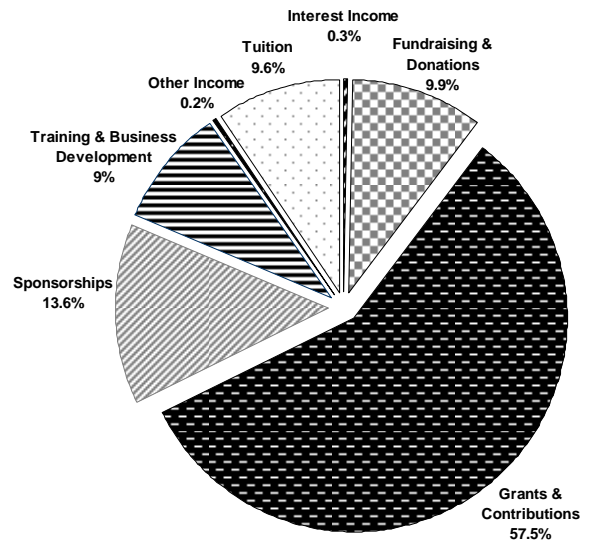


# Financials

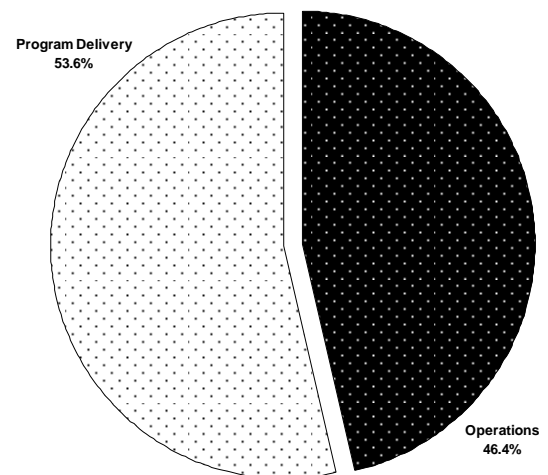
## Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets – General Fund For the Year Ended March 31, 2012

	2012	2011 (note 6)
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Donations	\$39,105	\$16,788
Tuition	126,300	130,600
Fundraising	91,492	17,014
Interest Income	3,923	4,772
Sponsorships	179,500	134,873
Grants & Contributions	759,839	714,809
Training & Business Development	119,419	37,253
Other Income	2,091	3,854
	<u>1,321,669</u>	<u>1,059,963</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Accommodations & Meals	114,510	119,157
Amortization	8,766	7,157
Communications & Marketing	59,909	36,959
Contract/Professional Services	359,573	223,605
Financial Services	6,622	1,946
Information Technology	11,220	13,772
Operations	72,248	78,167
Professional Development	1,850	10,190
Salaries & Benefits	528,887	462,973
Travel	22,535	154,154
	<u>1,186,120</u>	<u>1,108,080</u>
Surplus (Deficiency) of Revenue over expenses for the year	135,549	(48,117)
Net Assets, beginning of year	196,731	0
Transfer from Restricted Funds (statement 3) (note 5)	15,734	15,840
Net Assets, contributed by TCRL*	0	185,675
Net Assets, contributed by TORC*	0	43,333
<b>Net Assets, end of year</b>	<b>\$348,014</b>	<b>\$196,731</b>
Net Assets comprised of:		
Net invested in capital assets (note 4)	20,992	17,013
Unrestricted net assets	327,022	179,718
	<u>\$ 348,014</u>	<u>\$ 196,731</u>

### Revenue FY 2011-2012



### Expenses FY 2011-2012



\*TCRL – The Centre for Rural Leadership  
\*TORC – The Ontario Rural Council

See accompanying notes

## Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets – Restricted Funds For the Year Ended March 31, 2012

	Leadership Legacy Fund	W.G. Weston Foundation Fund	K. McKinnon Memorial Fund	Wm. A. Stewart Endowment Fund	2012 Total	2011 Total
REVENUE						
Investment Income	\$2,117	\$6,352	\$2,125	\$8,772	\$19,366	\$19,488
Net Assets, beginning of year	63,794	191,380	64,032	264,242	583,448	0
Net Assets, contributed by TCRL	0	0	0	0	0	579,800
Transfer to General Fund (note 5)	(1,906)	(4,446)	(1,488)	(7,894)	(15,734)	(15,840)
Net Assets, end of year	\$64,005	\$193,286	\$64,669	\$265,120	\$587,080	\$583,448

## Statement of Financial Position As at March 31, 2012

Assets	GENERAL	RESTRICTED (note 5)	TOTAL 2012	TOTAL 2011
<b>CURRENT</b>				
Cash	\$ 329,295	\$ 0	\$329,295	\$ 90,722
Investments	59,241	587,080	646,321	646,329
Accounts Receivable	114,470	0	114,470	41,586
Grant Receivable	134,524	0	134,521	44,175
Prepaid Expenses	25,209	0	25,209	10,508
	662,739	587,080	1,249,819	833,320
<b>CAPITAL</b> (note 4)	20,992	0	20,992	17,013
	<b>\$683,731</b>	<b>\$587,080</b>	<b>\$1,270,811</b>	<b>\$850,333</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>				
<b>CURRENT</b>				
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$81,009	\$ 0	\$81,009	\$67,262
Deferred Income	254,708	0	254,708	2,892
	\$335,717	\$ 0	\$335,717	\$70,154
<b>Net Assets</b>				
Assets Invested in Capital Assets (statement 2)	20,992	0	20,992	17,013
Unrestricted Net Assets (statement 2)	327,022	0	327,022	179,718
Restricted Net Assets (statement 3)	0	587,080	587,080	583,448
	348,014	587,080	935,094	780,179
	<b>\$683,731</b>	<b>\$587,080</b>	<b>\$1,270,811</b>	<b>\$850,333</b>

See accompanying notes

# Notes to the Financial Statements

## 1. NATURE OF BUSINESS

Rural Ontario Institute ("The Institute") is a registered charitable organization dedicated to building vision, voice and leadership for a strong and vibrant rural Ontario, and accordingly, is exempt from income tax. On April 1, 2010, The Centre for Rural Leadership and The Ontario Rural Council amalgamated to form the Rural Ontario Institute.

## 2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles and include the following significant accounting policies:

### (a) BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

The Institute follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions.

#### General Fund

The General Fund reports unrestricted resources available for The Institute's general operating activities.

#### Restricted Funds

The Restricted Funds report resources that are to be held as endowments. Restricted funds are comprised of the Leadership Legacy Fund, the Wm. A. Stewart Endowment Fund, the W. G. Weston Foundation Fund and the K. McKinnon Memorial Fund. These funds are to be invested, in trust, for The Institute, with investment income to be used to support the organization. A minimum of 10% of the total annual income of the Wm. A. Stewart Endowment Fund, 10% of the total annual income of the Leadership Legacy Fund and 30% of the total annual income of the W. G. Weston Foundation Fund and the K. McKinnon Memorial Fund must be reinvested under the conditions of the funds.

### (b) INVESTMENTS

Investments classified as held-for-trading are recorded at fair value.

### (c) CAPITAL ASSETS

Amortization is taken on assets at the following rates:

Computer equipment	- 3 years straight line basis
Website	- 4 years straight line basis
Furniture and equipment	- 20% declining balance basis

Amortization is taken at 50% of the above rates in the year of addition.

### (d) IMPAIRMENT OF LONG LIVED ASSETS

Long lived assets are tested for recoverability whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that their carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognized when the carrying value exceeds the total undiscounted cash flows expected from their use and eventual disposition. The amount of the impairment loss is determined as the excess of the carrying value of the asset over its fair value.

### (e) REVENUE RECOGNITION

Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate fund in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate fund when received or receivable if the amount can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Contributed or donated items are recorded if the fair market value is easily estimated and the organization would have purchased these items in the normal course of operations.

Investment income is recognized when earned.

### (f) USE OF ESTIMATES

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the year. Significant areas requiring the use of management estimates and assumptions relate to useful life of capital assets, valuation of prepaid expenses and accrued charges. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

# Notes to the Financial Statements

## 3. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

### Credit Risk Management

The organization's financial instruments consist of cash, investments, accounts receivable, grants receivable, accounts payable and accrued liabilities and deferred income. Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the organization is not exposed to significant interest, currency, credit or liquidity risks arising from these financial instruments.

### Fair value of financial assets and financial liabilities

The carrying values of cash, investments, accounts receivable, grants receivable, accounts payable and accrued liabilities, and deferred income approximate their fair value due to the relatively short periods to maturity of these items.

## 4. CAPITAL ASSETS

	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Accumulated Amortization</b>	<b>Net 2012</b>	<b>Net 2011</b>
Computer equipment	\$ 9,961	\$ 6,640	\$3,321	\$ 6,641
Website	16,050	7,813	8,237	8,474
Furniture and equipment	<u>10,904</u>	<u>1,470</u>	<u>9,434</u>	<u>1,898</u>
	<u>\$36,915</u>	<u>\$15,923</u>	<u>\$20,992</u>	<u>\$17,013</u>

## 5. TRANSFERS

The allowable portion of investment income in each restricted fund has been transferred to the general fund as per the guidelines in the restricted funds.

## 6. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Certain figures presented for comparative purposes have been reclassified to conform to the current year's presentation.

## 7. CAPITAL DISCLOSURES

Rural Ontario Institute defines capital as its unrestricted net assets of \$327,022. The Institute's objective when managing capital is to safeguard The Institute's ability to continue as a going concern and to hold sufficient unrestricted net assets to enable it to withstand negative unexpected financial events in order to maintain stability in the financial structure.

The Institute seeks to maintain sufficient liquidity to enable it to meet its obligations as they become due. The Institute holds investments to ensure sufficient liquidity. The Institute manages the capital structure and makes adjustments to it in light of changes in economic conditions. In order to maintain or adjust the capital structure, The Institute may redeem investments or increase fundraising activities.

The Institute is not subject to externally imposed capital requirements.

# Endowments

The *Rural Ontario Institute* is very appreciative of all endowments and gifts which have been received and that continue to grow and provide interest income to assist in financing the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) and fostering and growing the leadership qualities needed in rural Ontario.

## **Ken McKinnon Memorial Fund**

The Ken McKinnon Memorial Fund is a tribute to Ken McKinnon's leadership and service to Canadian agriculture, and a commitment to excellence in the agricultural leaders of tomorrow. During his 21 year tenure at the Ontario Milk Marketing Board, Ken played an integral role in leading the changes that revolutionized milk production, pricing and marketing in Ontario, and throughout Canada.

Through donations from families, individuals, businesses and organizations, the Ken McKinnon Memorial Fund fosters the leadership qualities needed in rural Ontario in the years ahead.

## **William A. Stewart Endowment**

The William A. Stewart Endowment was initiated in 1991 by the Agricultural Leadership Trust as a tribute to the late Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food, the Honourable William A. Stewart. The fund recognizes and honours his legacy of public service, community involvement and leadership.

As part of each AALP class the William A. Stewart Lecture & Reception is held every other year. This prestigious event provides an opportunity for public involvement, as well as a forum for the development of the leadership qualities exemplified by the work of William A. Stewart.

## **George Dmetriuc Memorial Fund**

The George Dmetriuc Memorial Fund was established by the Ontario Wheat Producers' Marketing Board as part of the William A. Stewart Endowment in 1993. The fund exemplifies the spirit of George Dmetriuc as a leader in Ontario agriculture.

The Ontario Wheat Producers' Marketing Board, other commodity organizations and friends and associates of George Dmetriuc provided this fund in recognition of the leadership that George contributed to Ontario agriculture, particularly in his capacity as a director and then chairman of the Ontario Wheat Board (1984 to 1992).

## **W. Garfield Weston Endowment**

The W. Garfield Weston Foundation originated in 1959, and is named in honour of Willard Garfield Weston, a Canadian who established successful business enterprises throughout Canada and in many parts of the world. The W. Garfield Weston Foundation's mandate states that grants are to be given for projects in Canada for the benefit of Canadians. The foundation currently directs its funds primarily to two areas: scholarships and land conservation.

Through the generosity of the Foundation, the endowment was established on receipt of an initial contribution in 1994, followed by additional funding in 1995 and 1996.

*To learn more about supporting the organization or our programs through endowments and bequests in the future, please contact the Rural Ontario Institute at 519-826-4204.*

# Strong Leaders, Organizations and Rural Communities

## Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP)

**Sponsorship** support is a long-standing tradition for the **Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP)**, and support from partners, agricultural businesses and industry organizations remains very strong. We are pleased to recognize the investment by each of our partners over the past year. A full listing of our 2011-2012 sponsors and donors is included in this annual report.

### Patrons \$50,000 +



### Champions \$10,000 - \$24,999



### Leaders \$5,000 - \$9,999



### Builders \$2,500 - \$4,999



### Supporters \$100 - \$2,499

AGRIBRANDS  
PURINA

BIO AGRI MIX

LIBRO FINANCIAL  
GROUP

ROBINSON  
LEADERSHIP

## Program Highlights

The 14 female and 16 male participants of Class 14 began their leadership journey in September 2011. During the first six months of their 19 month program they participated in a number of leadership development seminars and learning opportunities.

In particular they covered the following topics:

- Leadership theory and application
- Personality, self-understanding and development
- Shaping the future, dynamics of change – decision making and responsibility
- Political process, urban society and media training
- Examining and dealing with issues

They began their Issues Analysis Projects by working in groups as consultants with a number of rural and agricultural organizations and better defined their commitment to making a difference through leadership involvement as a result of their participation in AALP.

## Special Events & Fundraising

We have always enjoyed tremendous support from graduates and industry stakeholders through our special fundraising events. Highlights from 2011 - 2012 included:

### 2012 "Red Carpet Affair" Dream Auction

A record setting **\$92,000** was raised when attendees dug deep into their wallets for a great cause at the **2012 "Red Carpet Affair" Dream Auction** in support of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) on February 11, 2012. With a sold out crowd of over 450 in attendance and close to 350 donated items to bid on the 2012 Dream Auction set a record for the highest number of attendees, most item donations, most event sponsorships and for the most cash received in donations. This brings the total raised by this fundraising event to more than \$516,000 since the first auction was held in 1997.

**Gala Sponsor:**  
Scotiabank

**Event Sponsors:**  
Monsanto Canada Inc.  
RBC Financial Group

**Reception Sponsors:**  
Gay Lea Foods Cooperative Ltd.  
Grain Farmers of Ontario  
John Deere Canada ULC

### AALP Class 14 Fun'draising Curling Bonspiel

Twelve teams came out to support AALP on Friday, March 23, 2012 at the Tillsonburg & District Curling Club for Class 14's fun'draising curling bonspiel. During this one day event, almost **\$1,000** was raised in support of AALP, thanks to the efforts of Class 14 and this event's supporters.

### AALP Founding Partners



# Steps to Leadership

Steps to Leadership is a collaborative initiative of



Funding for this project is provided in part by



Additional support provided by:

**Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs**

**Pioneer Hi-Bred Limited**

## New Partnerships

Partnerships were formed with a number of municipal and community organizations over the past year to deliver the Steps to Leadership programming throughout Ontario, including: the Arts Council of Muskoka (Muskoka), Highlands Community Co-operative (Grey Highlands), the City of Temiskaming Shores (Temiskaming Shores), Volunteer Thunder Bay (Thunder Bay), the Town of Smiths Falls (Smiths Falls), and two Francophone organizations – Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de l'Ontario (Eastern Ontario), and Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara (Hamilton and Niagara).

## Registration & Travel Reimbursement Program

Approximately \$15,000 was distributed to over 60 individuals throughout Ontario to access leadership development opportunities.

## Leading Edge Summit

The second annual Leading Edge Summit was held October 18 and 19, 2011. The theme was *"How to Make Change Happen in Your Community: Innovative Tools and Techniques that Work!"* Sixty leaders and change-makers from across rural Ontario gathered for two days to explore interesting tools and techniques for creating positive change through hands-on workshops, networking opportunities, a Pecha Kucha storytelling event and an open space session. In attendance were community and organization volunteers, board and staff members, consultants, entrepreneurs, educators, government workers, elected officials and community advocates. Feedback from the 2011 Leading Edge Summit participants was once again quite positive: *"This is such an incredible learning opportunity, keep up the great work."* *"Exceptionally good value and certainly fills a need."* *"Great job! Look forward to attending next year and bringing more people."*

# Advanced Board Leadership Training

## Ontario Cattlemen's Association (OCA) BUILD Program Pilot #1 Launched

In collaboration with the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI), the Ontario Cattlemen's Association (OCA) committed in the fall of 2011, to the development and implementation of a pilot program to recruit and train a group of visionary organization leaders who are capable of moving the Ontario beef industry forward. The first class of the program commenced in January, 2012 and in mid-April, 15 participants successfully graduated from the program.

## Ontario Beekeepers' Association Leadership Training Workshop

In March 2012, ROI delivered a two-day workshop to members of the Ontario Beekeepers' Association. The program curriculum's objectives were: to increase the leadership skills and capacity of organization leaders and individuals currently holding key leadership roles within the Ontario Beekeepers' Association; and to have well prepared organization leaders who have the skills necessary to move the organization forward with vision and foresight.

# Leadership Training

The Rural Ontario Institute offered a number of skills based leadership and organizational development training and topical seminars and workshops for rural Ontarians during 2011-2012.

In collaboration with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, a **Train the Trainer** pilot program was launched in March, 2012 in Thunder Bay. The program's objectives were to prepare individuals within rural organizations to step into the trainer role and to be able to facilitate workshops within rural Northern Ontario about essential meeting skills. Fourteen participants completed the three training modules (*Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members; Effective Meetings; and Program and Annual Planning*).

# Effective Facilitation of Dialogue & Collaboration on Rural Issues and Opportunities



The Conference Board of Canada  
Insights You Can Count On



Northeast Community Network

## Building On-line Networks

Subscriptions grew from approximately 350 to 540 by the end of 2011/2012. On-line networking capability was enhanced with Bulletin Board and Event Listings for subscriber use. The accessibility of rural studies and reports was improved through regular additions to the Resources and Reports section of the website. The Rural Ontario Reader service was introduced featuring automated updating through RSS feeds of rural news organizations, social media sources and government communications.

## Workshops (engaged 2100+ individuals in 2011/12)

The **Asset Based Community Development** workshop series with Peter Kenyon in June, 2011 had 240+ registrants at seven locations and linked us with a number of local and provincial partners, including The Monieson Centre/Ontario East EDC for one session at the Rural Creative Economy Conference in Picton on June 15. The feedback from the workshops was extremely positive.

ROI supported ten workshop sessions for municipal stakeholders on **“Success Factors in Rural CED”**, as part of the Knowledge Translation and Transfer Agreement with Dr. Wayne Caldwell from the University of Guelph. ROI presented at the AMO conference in August before several hundred municipal delegates. Other locations included Milverton, Meaford, Kincardine and Smooth Rock Falls.

During the year ROI helped several other organizations integrate rural themes into their events. ROI helped plan the June 8 Connections to Revitalize Communities Ontario CCEDNet event in Toronto. ROI facilitated a breakout session during the conference. At the Southwest Economic Alliance Assembly in Guelph, June 9-10, ROI participated in a plenary session featuring Solidarite rurale du Quebec and Mario Lefebvre, The Conference Board of Canada. ROI facilitated a break-out workshop on urban/rural synergies with Claire Bolduc, chair, Solidarite rurale du Quebec.

## Contributing the Rural Perspective and Influencing Policy

ROI developed, posted and circulated a set of **“Questions of Importance to Small Town and Rural Ontario”** in relation to key issues and the recent Ontario election. Several other NGO’s picked up on it and linked to the ROI site. The Ontario Farmer used several of the questions in their all party synopsis. Subsequently, ROI board member, Chris White was invited to be part of TVO’s **“The Agenda with Steve Paikin”**.

As a follow-up to the throne speech ROI sent a letter to the Minister of Training Colleges and Universities urging MTCU to consider small towns hit hard by the economic downturn, as potential locations for three new undergraduate campuses.



ROI corresponded with the Premier, offering to engage rural stakeholders in a dialogue concerning potential government directions and in so doing highlighted ROMA's "A Voice for Rural and Northern Ontario" paper calling for a rural policy lens.

Thirty-nine blogs were posted throughout the year – most dealing with current issues. A number were from "guest" organizations, something that ROI will continue to promote to give voice to rural concerns.

Staff and board representatives met with federal Agriculture critic Frank Valeriote, presented to the Federal Liberal Rural Caucus, and met informally with new OMAFRA Minister and more formally with the new Assistant Deputy Minister.

ROI drafted, circulated and then submitted a brief on the program design for the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund to the Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation (MEDI).

Behind the scenes ROI was consulted by several stakeholder organizations in relation to the FIT review and the impacts on rural Ontario of the proposed changes to the revenue from slots at raceways. ROI staff facilitated a panel session at the annual Ontario Farmland Trust policy forum.

ROI participated in a roundtable forum hosted by the Samara Foundation to discuss its findings on *Disengaged Citizens' Views on Politics and Democracy* based on focus groups it held including one with rural Canadians.

ROI also participated in a one day forum of the fledgling Ontario Network on Ecosystem Services. ROI partnered with the Canadian Urban Institute in a seminar promoting more recycling of aggregate to reduce the need for new quarries.

## Sharing Information and Understanding of Rural issues

The *Benchmarking Rural Community Attractiveness to Newcomers* project was completed on budget, on time and went beyond initial scope to include more deliverables. Benchmarking indicators were selected, data was prepared, distributed to test communities and a workshop was held at the AMO offices in Toronto with stakeholders from 13 rural regions/communities to gather feedback. Subsequently ROI transferred copyright, as well as updating and training responsibilities to OMAFRA on the resulting tool. ROI presented at the 2012 EDCO and 2012 ROMA conferences on the development of the "**Benchmarking Rural Community Attractiveness to Newcomers**" tool.

ROI was involved in several rural research initiatives, participating as a member of the EDCO regional research committee and in the review committee for the Ag and Rural Policy theme proposals under the University of Guelph/OMAFRA agreement.

With The Monieson Centre we are a member of the Leadership Team for the three year Revitalizing Rural Economies SSHRC funded research project and are following up the Knowledge Impact in Society workshops that produced the Rural Research Priorities report several years ago. ROI provided administrative support for the national Rural Research Workshop held in Ottawa last year in June and this year in May.

ROI continues to proactively engage other organizations working in rural Ontario through "meet and greet" sessions where priorities and initiatives are shared to better enable partnerships and build networks. In 2011/12 this included diverse organizations such as FWIO, 4-H Ontario, CFFO, OFA, FarmStart, Sustain Ontario, Samara, Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, AMI, Agricultural Adaption Council, and others.



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