



Annual Report 2019

BOOK CLUBS FOR INMATES

www.bookclubsforinmates.com
info@bookclubsforinmates.com



Book Clubs for Inmates (BCFI) is a registered charity which organizes volunteer-led book clubs within federal penitentiaries across Canada. Currently, BCFI facilitates 36 book clubs from Nova Scotia to British Columbia.

BCFI runs French and English language book clubs for men and women incarcerated in minimum, medium, and maximum security facilities. Book clubs are usually made up of 10-18 members who meet once a month to discuss books, both fiction and non-fiction, of literary merit.

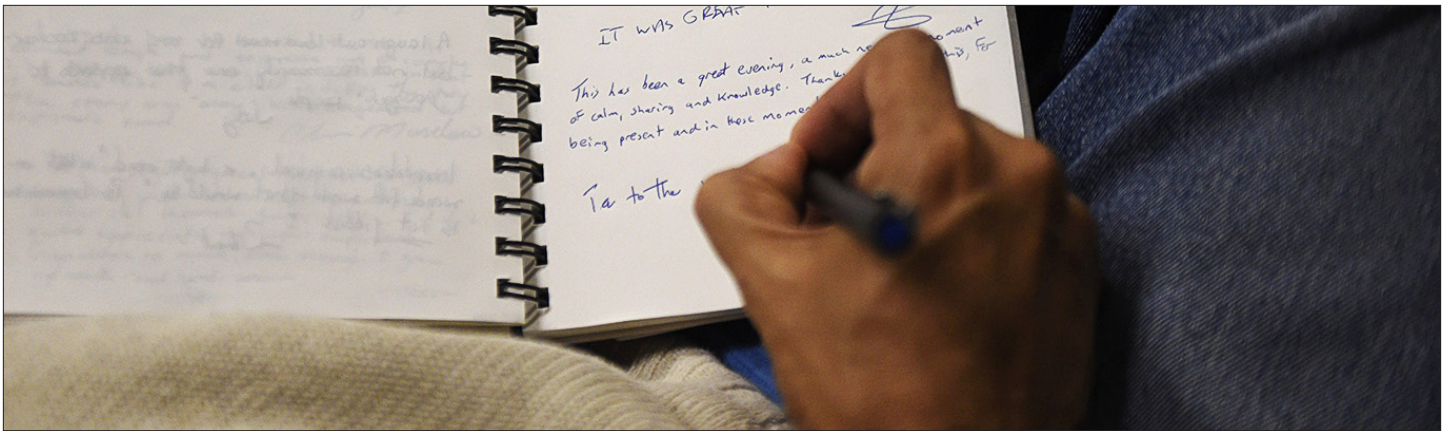
Every month, hundreds of inmates participate in book clubs across the country and each year thousands of brand new books are purchased, read, and discussed.

It is our mission to establish book clubs in every federal penitentiary across Canada.

Transforming lives one book at a time.

“Book Clubs for Inmates is doing important work for incarcerated women and men in Canada’s penitentiaries. I heartily support the work of BCFI and I encourage you to do so as well.”

- Margaret Atwood



FROM THE FOUNDER **Carol Finlay** AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR **Erin O'Sullivan**

Our Annual Report is our opportunity to connect with our community and share our many accomplishments. Your donations and support have had a huge impact on the work of Books Clubs for Inmates across Canada, and have allowed us to grow and further develop each of our programs. Book Clubs for Inmates now has 36 book clubs across Canada, a growing child-inmate reading program (ChIRP), an inmate scholarship program, and a program of parolee support. We are so grateful for your support that enables us to do so much.

We are especially grateful to all our volunteers for their passion, commitment, and care. Each book club volunteer changes lives for the better. Our work is almost completely dependent on these volunteers who drive to prisons in all sorts of remote places, in all sorts of weather, to offer community, compassion, and thoughtful discussion.

And we are grateful to you, all our many friends, who support us in so many ways, cheering us on as we work to bring literature, engaged discussions, and pro-social skills to the incarcerated in Canada's prisons - those who are 'the least the last and the lost' in our society.

Thank you for your ongoing support; we hope you will be inspired by our 2019 Annual Report.

Carol Finlay O.Ont, MSM, Founder
Erin O'Sullivan, Executive Director



Our Impact in 2019

Number of books delivered

6,000

Number of book clubs

36

Number of students pursuing degrees while inside

13

Number of BCFI volunteers

130

Number of volunteer hours

15,600

Number of ChIRP programs

4

2019 HIGHLIGHTS



Carol Finlay received an honorary degree from St. Thomas University on July 5, 2019. She was recognized for founding BCFI and bringing life and hope through literature to those who are incarcerated and who are among the most marginalized populations in Canada.

Book Clubs: This year we continued to open new book clubs, bringing the number of active clubs up to **36**.

Children of Inmates Reading Program: ChIRP is an exciting program for BCFI which supports healthy parent/child relationships and promotes the love of learning. We have programs operating in four institutions in Ontario and Nova Scotia.

Author visits: Visits by authors to BCFI book clubs is extremely meaningful to our members. In 2019, we were thrilled to host several inspiring authors, including Steven Heighton, Colin Campbell, Tasneem Jamal, Chrystine Brouillet, Joan McEwan, Esi Edugyan, and Kathleen Winter.

Inmate University Education: Through financial support to the Post-Secondary Prison Foundation, BCFI supports inmates pursuing university education while in prison. In 2019, through our support, 13 incarcerated students took courses toward their university degrees.

Recognition: Eric Friesen, a long-serving BCFI volunteer at Collin's Bay Maximum Institution, recently became a member of the Order of Canada. The Order of Canada honours individuals who make extraordinary contributions to the nation. Eric's engagement with Book Club for Inmates is just one of his many outstanding services to society. Congratulations, Eric!



@BookClubsforInmates



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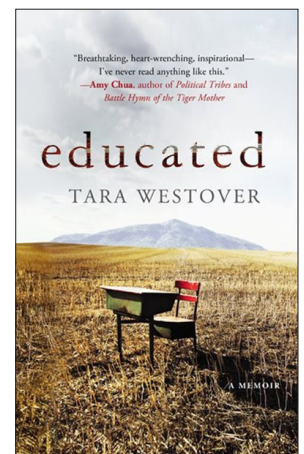
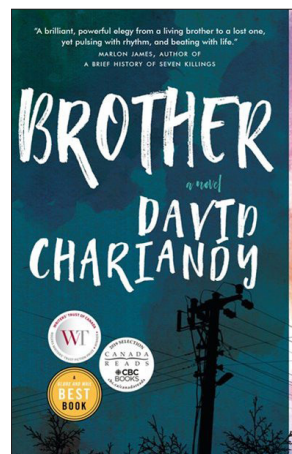
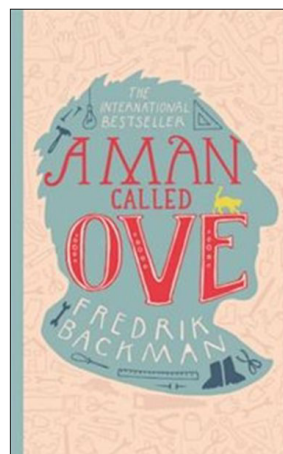
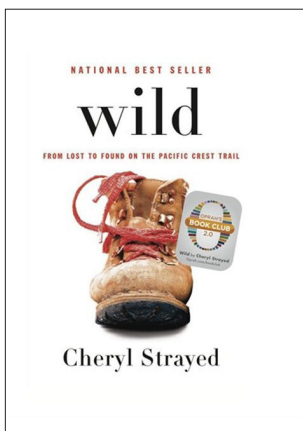
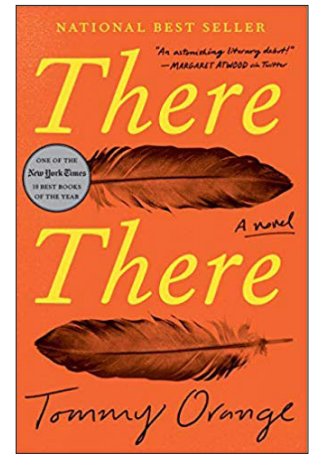
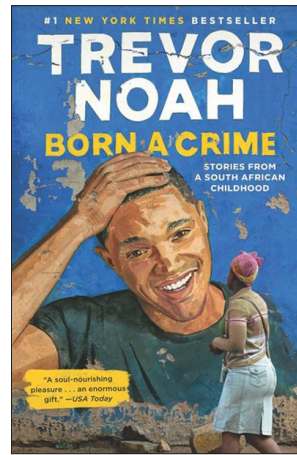
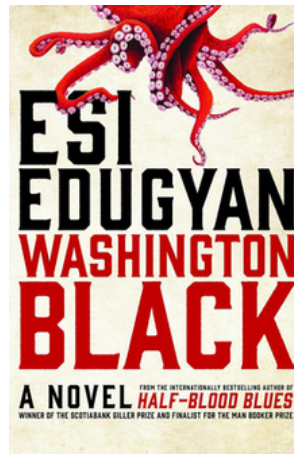
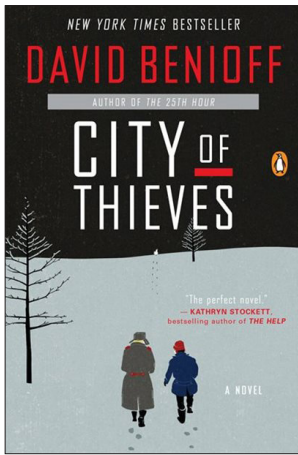


@BooksforInmates



BookClubs for Inmates

2019 FAVOURITE BOOKS



“I have been a book club facilitator for the last 8 years and I have learned that the men are very much like my son, my friends and myself except for circumstances and bad choices. Some of the discussions we have had in the book club for inmates are so much better than discussions I have with my friends in community book clubs. Some of the men become insightful and wise because of their circumstances. The book club is a small way of helping the men listen to others, see other perspectives, and treat other opinions with respect.”

- *Book Club facilitator*

“This book is exactly the way my life was. Reading this book has given me hope.”
- *Book Club member*

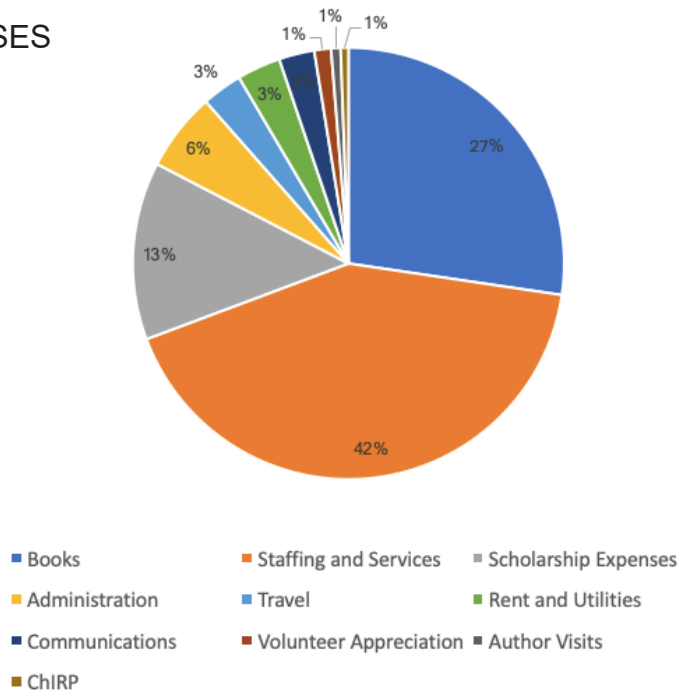
2019 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Year end December 31, 2019

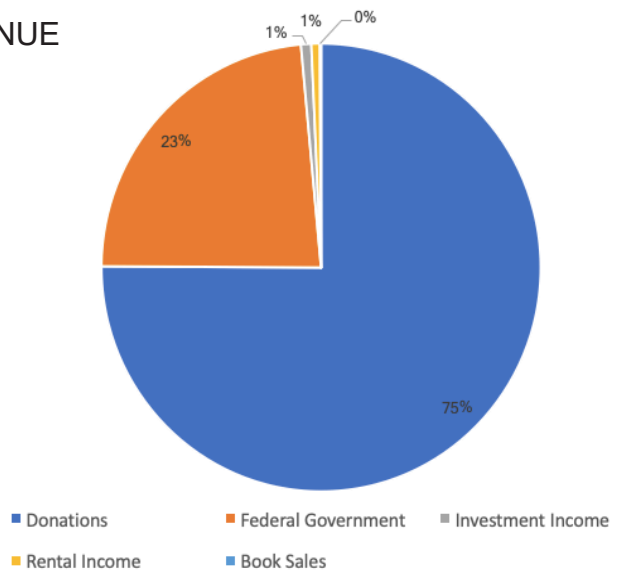
BCFI Charitable Registration No. 80417 0009 RR0001

Full financial Statements are available at: info@bookclubsforinmates.com

EXPENSES



REVENUE



OUR SPONSORS



OUR PARTNERS



NAACJ · ANIJC



Social responsibility
Responsabilité sociale

“I heard about your program on the radio and I think it’s awesome. I work with folks in the criminal justice system and any opportunities for hope must be supported. Keep up the excellent work!”

- *BCFI Monthly Donor*



BCFI BC volunteers (from left) Jen Priest, Candice Archer, Ali Fassbender, Amelia Heins, and Lucy Fraser.

Staff



Erin O'Sullivan
Executive Director



Sam Campbell
Director of Advancement



Lindsay Yates
Program Coordinator

Area Directors

Louise Hoelscher
Quebec

Candice Archer
British Columbia

Lorna Watkinson Zimmer
Prairies



CHILDREN OF INMATES READING PROGRAM

BCFI's commitment to the successful reintegration of inmates and to stronger, healthier communities includes the development of Children of Inmates Reading Program (ChIRP). The mandate of ChIRP is to build and enhance a healthier parent/child relationship, develop literacy and listening skills, increase vocabulary and attention spans for children and promote a love of learning in children through the consistent presence of a parent and books.

For the past 15 years, Carla Veitch, a children's educator, has been successfully developing and operating a parent/child reading initiative.

Twice a month, volunteers enter the institution and offer inmates the opportunity to select a book for their child and then read that book into a recording device. The book and recording are then mailed to the child.

We currently have four ChIRP groups in Ontario and Nova Scotia. Two new groups are set to open in early 2020.

Carla Veitch
ChIRP Coordinator



"It is always exciting to know we are enriching the lives of these families in crisis by providing such a positive connection."

- ChIRP volunteer

Board of Directors

Margaret Atwood, CC, OOnt, FRSC, FRSL
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Ian Binnie, CC, QC
Honorary Chair

Bryan Finlay, QC
Chair

Rev Dr Carol Finlay, OOnt, MSM
Founder & Director

Fiona Fitzpatrick
Treasurer

Anita Grace
Director

Sharon McFadzean
Director

John McKellar, CM, QC
Director

Jonathan Rose
Director



Margaret Atwood, CC,
OOnt, FRSC, FRSL
Honorary Patron



Ian Binnie, CC, Q.C.
Honorary Chair

“The young man who showed up to observe last month came back and proudly announced that this was the first book he has ever read in English. He and another man in the group read together. He is looking forward to the next challenge and plans to try it on his own with a dictionary! These are the stories that motivate me!”

- *BCFI volunteer*



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