

In Memoriam



Casey Cosgrove: A financial education pioneer

It is with deep sadness that we share the news of Casey Cosgrove's passing.

Casey was a cherished friend and colleague, as well as one of Canada's earliest and most passionate champions of community financial education. Those who knew him will remember him most for his irrepressible energy and entrepreneurial spirit, his ready laugh, his warmth, and his driving interest in others – particularly young people.

Casey joined Prosper Canada (then SEDI) in 1995 when he and the organization were both very young and it can be said that he and the organization grew up together. An incurable entrepreneur by nature, Casey, developed a suite of innovative initiatives to support young people at risk or living in poverty to build their self-sufficiency and a stronger financial future through self-employment.

Casey built many lasting partnerships for the organization in support of this work and earned many admirers in the community sector and funding community for his innovative programs which helped to transform the lives of thousands of youth across Canada.

Through this work, Casey gradually became convinced of the fundamental value of, and need for, financial education to help micro-entrepreneurs acquire the financial knowledge and skills they need to succeed in business. He also saw broader need though, for more general community financial education programs to address a fundamental gap in basic money management skills among Canadians.

Starting in 2005, Casey began to raise funds and lay the groundwork for a financial education curriculum, teaching resources, and a training program that could equip community workers to deliver quality financial education tailored to the needs of vulnerable Canadians and to build financial education into other community programs serving newcomers, people living with disabilities, people living in poverty and many others.

Five years later, with the help of a comprehensive business plan developed *pro bono* by Deloitte and a founding partnership and core funding provided by TD Bank Group, Casey's dream of a Canadian Centre for Financial Literacy was launched.

At what should have been the start of the next great phase of his career, Casey was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer and had to pass his cherished project onto others. While focusing on his family and health was job one for the next seven years, Casey was never far away and was able to see his dream take shape – Canada's community financial education field grow and develop,

Canada's launch of a National Financial Literacy Strategy, and the Centre he started become an international leader in community financial education.

This year, the Prosper Canada Centre for Financial Literacy and its many partners will help over 80,000 Canadians living in poverty to build their financial capability and measurably improve their financial health.

None of this would have been possible, however, without Casey's vision, drive and animating spirit, which continues to inspire our efforts today. Few Canadians can claim such a generous, great hearted and enduring legacy.

Casey will be missed terribly by all who knew him, but his mark on Canada will only continue to grow with time and flourish in the many lives he continues to nurture and strengthen across our land.

Liz Mulholland
CEO, Prosper Canada