

Community Adult Learning Program invites learners to upcoming open house

By William Cockerell
Shootin' the Breeze Reporter

Pincher Creek Community Adult Learning Program continues to support adult learners from all walks of life, and is set to host an adult student registration day and open house next week.

As is the case with its programming, the open house is designed for adults interested in returning to learning, seeking new education pathways, upgrading skills and exploring new career opportunities.

The free-to-attend open house will be held at the local CALP on Wednesday, Feb. 11, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., offering curious adults the chance to meet with staff and explore a number of programs intended to support learners in Pincher Creek and surrounding area.

According to Pincher Creek CALP's executive director, Monica Sczyrba-Davis, CALP is designed to support adults from all walks of life at all stages of learning, most notably those whose education may have been interrupted due to unforeseen circumstances.

"The Pincher Creek Community Adult Learning Program is really about meeting people where they're at with learning and employment readiness needs and coaching, supporting, helping to navigate the pathways to move from where they're at to where they're going," she says.

CALP provides a wide range of programming for adult learners looking to fill a gap in their educational needs. This programming includes education and employment readiness training, English language learning, foundational literacy support, numeracy and digital skills support, learner's licence preparation, and coaching for high school completion.

The upcoming open house is meant to be a low-pressure opportunity for community members to learn more about available programming and ask questions in a face-to-face setting, in order to assess what supports might suit their needs.

"It's an opportunity for those folks who are even a tiny bit curious about [learning] if there's something here for them or for another adult in their family or their circle," Monica says.

Rather than conducting a formal presentation, the event will focus on informal dialogue. Attendees can tour the space, meet with staff either as a group or through one-on-one discussions, and share their education goals or challenges in a judgment-free setting.

"It's very casual," Monica says. "It's not hordes of people. It's usually a gentle trickle, so we can have those one-on-one or small-group conversations."

This sort of event aligns with CALP's mission to create a welcoming, nurturing atmosphere for



Photo courtesy of Monica Sczyrba-Davis

Staff and graduates of Pincher Creek Community Adult Learning Program crafted bead bracelets to mark the success and learning achieved together. This is a fine example of the sort of welcoming environment provided by Pincher Creek CALP, and staff will look to showcase its nurturing approach at an open house on Wednesday, Feb. 11.

adult learners, particularly those who may feel anxious about returning to a learning space.

The goal is to emphasize comfort and flexibility for individuals, while respecting their experiences and understanding that previous schooling may not have been a positive endeavour.

"There's so many adults who, for a variety of reasons, had interruptions on their education journey, so they're missing those foundational pieces," Monica says.

"It feels more like home. It feels nothing like school."

Cost is often a factor for adults who are hesitant to pursue continued learning opportunities, and this is something that staff at Pincher Creek CALP recognize.

According to Monica, many CALP programs are fully funded, giving them the ability to waive many of the fees that would otherwise exist. Additional supports, such as transportation assistance and child-care subsidies may also be available to help ensure adult participation.

"We never want the fee to be a barrier to learning," she says.

With this in mind, Pincher Creek CALP hopes that those who might be on the fence about continued learning will take advantage of the registration and open house event, inviting all with interest regardless of what stage of life they are in.

"Sometimes we need an invitation — we need to feel like, 'Oh, this is meant for me,'" Monica explains.

"You don't have to sign up, you're not paying

any money, there's no expectation. You can come and go as you need. This is meant for anyone who wants to learn and move forward."

Those with questions regarding the open house or programming, or that can't make it and are looking to meet with staff at another time, can call or text Pincher Creek CALP at 403-339-1556. More information can be found online at pincherlearn.ca.

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