**Revised Concept Wording**

*Marie Beam, Maryland, USA, and Karin Gausman, Colorado, USA*

In December 2014, the LLLI Board of Directors voted to change the wording on the breast milk concept and the accompanying concept policy statement in Appendix 17. (See sidebar for new wording.)

It is rare that changes are made to LLLI concept statements. Eight concepts summarizing LLLI philosophy were adopted in 1972. One of these stated that *Breast milk is the superior infant food.* The mother-baby relationship concept was added in 1973. The concept on loving guidance was included in 1975 and the wording changed a little in 1979. For the past 43 years, we have relied on the same “superior infant food” concept.
This new change arose from a request to the Board to reconsider the wording of the concept in a way that would present human milk as the “norm” rather than comparing it to formula. Over a dozen Leaders worldwide participated for a year in an online discussion workgroup, dialoguing about nuances of each word in the concept, as well as how words might translate into languages other than English. The final version passed the required votes of approval at two separate Board readings.

The concept now says:

Human milk is the natural food for babies, uniquely meeting their changing needs.

What does this mean for your LAD work? You will need to change the wording in saved documents or paragraphs you use in application correspondence. If you notice any LAD documents which should be updated, please contact your LAD support person. Let the Applicants you are working with know about this change and discuss why it is such an improvement. Share our excitement about this great new wording, which more accurately communicates what we believe.

With so much emphasis now placed on natural foods, the new wording should strike a chord with many expectant mothers. Indeed, it makes it clear that breastfeeding is more than just one option; it is every baby’s birth right.

Marie Beam lives in Kensington, Maryland, USA, just north of Washington, D.C. She and her husband, Eric, have three grown children and one grandson. Marie has been a Leader since 1992 and a member of the LAD since 1996. She has served as one of two LAD Council Coordinators the past five years, and served on the Concept Workgroup, organized by the LLLI Board, that came up with the new concept wording.

Karin Gausman has been a Leader for 40 years and she lives in Loveland, Colorado, USA, with her husband, Jim, and Emmy, an adopted Shih Tzu from the animal shelter. They have three grown children, Quinn, Benj, and Pete, and four grandchildren, ages 10-18: Alana, Sam, Max, and Camille Kay. Karin joined the LAD 27 years ago and served as the LAD Director together with Alison Parkes for five years until 2010 March.
When we receive inquiries from mothers interested in leadership as a stepping stone to a career in lactation, we may be wary of investing time in working with them, only to find that they have little interest in giving back to the organisation. Such inquiries may however be as varied as any others that we receive, so keeping an open mind can help us to respond to them appropriately.

Consider the following three scenarios from three very different women:

Dear LLL,

I am a public health nurse and would like eventually to become an IBCLC. Your organisation provides great support for mothers and I would like to tap into that as an LLL Leader and set up Groups for the mothers I work with. Please let me know my next steps.

Thank you,
Nancy Nurse

“Nancy Nurse” may not have children or may have had a breastfeeding experience that does not meet the prerequisites. However, even though her initial approach is as a professional, offering services to mothers, she may very well have experience that meets the prerequisites. Learning more about leadership may cause her to change her plan and decide to apply anyway as a volunteer mother-to-mother helper. If not, she will know more about LLL and may share that information with mothers she meets in her professional capacity.

Dear Leader Accreditation Department,

I have been attending my local LLL Group and I love it. I would love to know more about leadership. Becoming a mother has been such a great experience for me that I have decided to rethink my career path and would love to become a doula or a lactation consultant in the future. LLL leadership seems to be a great place to start.

Thank you,
Molly Mother

“Molly Mother” can be directed back to her local Group to learn more about leadership. If she meets the prerequisites, the Leaders of her Group will be the ones to recommend her and work with her as she prepares for leadership. If she does not meet the prerequisites, there is always a possibility that she might in the future. If the Leaders of the Group are unwilling to recommend her (and perhaps that is why she is approaching the LAD), then receiving detailed information on the prerequisites from the LAD can help to clarify for her why she cannot apply at this time.

“Hannah Helper” may or may not meet the prerequisites, but an encouraging response from the LAD could be the first step in bringing LLL and breastfeeding support to her community, whether or not she ever becomes a Leader or a lactation consultant herself. A mother who begins as a mother-to-mother volunteer may well go on to become an IBCLC or other professional helper in the future, as many have done before. As a Leader, Hannah would come to
Dear LLL,

I am a new mother in an isolated region. When I had some challenges in the early days of breastfeeding I found that there were very few services available in my area. I’d like to change that by setting up an LLL Chapter and becoming a lactation consultant, so that I can help others. Please let me know how I can go about doing this.

Thank you,
Hannah Helper

value our mother-to-mother approach and would learn about keeping her volunteer work and any professional role separate.

These women each have their unique set of circumstances and experiences. They may or may not meet the prerequisites to applying for leadership and they may or may not even know that such prerequisites exist. They have varying levels of knowledge about what a Leader does and how a Leader’s help differs from other kinds of breastfeeding help. They also have differing levels of knowledge about La Leche League as a philosophy-based organisation. What they all share is a commitment to the importance of breastfeeding and a desire to help, so this is a good place to start in responding to them. We can acknowledge their commitment and thank them for their desire to bring LLL help to mothers in their community.

We can follow by sharing a document on thinking about leadership to explain the responsibilities of leadership, the work and cost of the application and the prerequisites to applying. Thinking about La Leche League Leadership? is available (no password is needed) in the Leader's Pre-Application Packet on the Alliance website at http://www.lllalliance.org/leaders-pre-application-packet/, or your entity may have its own version of this document. This may be enough to make it clear that leadership may not be a good fit for some of those who express interest in applying. Alternatively, it may spark their interest to know more if they believe that the fit is a good one for their situation and experience and that they meet the prerequisites to applying for leadership. Either way, this should suffice as an initial response in most cases. Whatever the outcome, the LAD representative can remain positive and welcoming to all those interested in leadership.

Since LLL is not a professional body and leadership is not a professional qualification, it might seem to some that leadership is a lesser qualification than being an IBCLC. It may appear to be a stepping stone towards professional certification. In fact LLL leadership is not a quick and easy path towards becoming a lactation consultant, but is a different path entirely. By clearly explaining what leadership entails, we can dispel this myth and enhance our credibility. All of the contacts we make and all of the time we spend responding to inquiries about leadership are valuable. They enhance our reputation for diligence in our work of accrediting Leaders and they help us to spread accurate information about LLL.

Lesley Robinson lives with her husband, Mark, in Ottawa, Canada. Their three grown children, Kate (born 1985), Alex (1987) and Will (1989) have flown the nest, although the boys have both returned home, much to their parents’ delight. Lesley was accredited in 1987 and has been a LAD representative since 1991.

Ten Steps to a New ACLA

Karin Gausman, Colorado, USA

1. Project an attitude of fun and satisfaction when talking about LAD work with other Leaders. Emphasize what drew you to LAD and why you’ve stayed. Share LAD
Work: Is it for you? which is available at: http://www.llalliance.org/top-lad-page/lad-representative-resources/ (password: 4LADreps) and invite questions. If you are overburdened at the time, ask your support person for help.

2. When corresponding with an Applicant who is prompt, articulate, and has a good understanding of LLL philosophy, tell her that you think she would make a good Associate Coordinator of Leader Accreditation (ACLA) in the future—and why!

3. Take advantage of attending a conference or workshop to advertise LAD work. Set up a table with flyers/posters or make a “flat ACLA” to go with you to sessions. See LADders 2011-2 at: http://www.llalliance.org/lad-newsletters/ladders/ (password: 4LADreps)

4. Publish some “LAD ads” in your entity newsletter such as Area Leaders’ Letter or online Leader list. See the samples in this article.

5. You might look through the Area Directory for names of possible candidates and send a “you have been recommended letter” to several Leaders. We don’t say who made the recommendation, but just knowing that someone else sees her in that position may entice a Leader to learn more.

6. Let an interested Leader get hands-on experience with LAD work by introducing some orientation tasks before making an appointment. That way you and she can see if she can: weave LAD work into her life, respond promptly, like the work, have a learning attitude.

7. Talk with her about how she wants to structure her orientation. Some Leaders like using checklists (and there are several for LAD orientation). Make her a partner in this venture.

8. Orientation is often divided into two basic parts: topic discussion and prototype writing practice. There are some good reasons for starting with the discussion, but that can get tedious after a while. You might take some “side trips” to practice dialogue relating to the topic from time to time.

9. Make editing a partnership. When editing her drafts, encourage her feedback. She may have reasons you haven’t thought of for why she wants to say something specific. Editing first and foremost is for clarity and accuracy. Discussion of tone and of “LAD style” will help the ACLA in orientation to edit her own work as she gains experience. Once she is proficient with the prototypes, she won’t need to copy you when writing to Applicants.

10. When she is ready, give her real applications gradually. The more practice she gets, the easier it will become for her to respond, and she will soon feel confident about taking more applications.

Sample LAD Promotions

Would you enjoy an LLL job you could do in your pajamas?
Would you like to set your own work hours, changing them from day to day if needed?
Do you sometimes have time available at odd hours?
Do you enjoy getting mail?  
Sound interesting? For more information, contact: [CLA name, address, phone, email]

Calling Experienced Leaders!  
Are you a Leader who is ready for a challenge beyond Group work? Have you considered using your LLL experience to become an Associate Coordinator of Leader Accreditation (ACLA) for your Area? Contact [CLA name, address, phone, email] for more information!

[Area’s] Leader Accreditation Department Wants You!  

LLL of [Area] needs an Associate Coordinator of Leader Accreditation (ACLA) to meet the needs of Applicants in our Area.

What does an ACLA do? She accredits new Leaders. The strength and growth of LLL depends on its current and future Leaders, so the ACLA position is vital to the future of LLL.

How much time does it take? While prompt responses are vital in Leader Accreditation Department work, many of the tasks can be easily scheduled around family needs. An ACLA can write while waiting for children’s activities to be over, at night, or whenever time is available. Her workload is flexible to accommodate her abilities and family commitments.

What are the rewards? An ACLA has the opportunity to work with Leaders and Applicants around the Area. She works with other Area Council members to help manage LLL of [Area]. Being an ACLA can also be a time of personal growth and satisfaction—not to mention fun!

What are the requirements? A new ACLA needs experience as a Group Leader, the desire to learn about LAD work, an interest in writing, and some organizational skills. She may have experience working with an Applicant in her own Group, but that is not a requirement.

How does she learn the job? The Coordinator of Leader Accreditation (CLA) works with the ACLA during orientation and remains available as her support and information resource.

How long is the term of office? The term is for three years, with the possibility of two one-year extensions. An ACLA’s expenses are paid by the Area.

Interested? Curious? Want more information? Is there someone you’d like to recommend? Contact [CLA name, address, phone, email]

• Editor’s note: The author’s biography is available after “Revised Concept Wording” in this issue.

Semi-Annual Report: Compilation  
16 Apr 2014 - 15 Oct 2014  
LAD Council  

• The information from the previous SAR is indicated in parentheses.
• Italics include/indicate estimated figures based on recent reports.
### Affiliates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affiliates</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Applicants</th>
<th>New Applications</th>
<th>Discontinued Applications</th>
<th>Accreditations</th>
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<th>Discontinued Applications</th>
<th>Accreditations</th>
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### USA Area Networks

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<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
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<td>566 (585)</td>
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### LLLI Total

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<td>6,174 (6,226)</td>
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<td>1,355 (1,407)</td>
<td>433 (467)</td>
<td>212 (211)</td>
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**Semi-Annual Report**

16 Apr 2014 - 15 Oct 2014

**Comparison of Four Reporting Periods**

LAD Council
- Affiliates: Canada English, Canada French, Great Britain, New Zealand
- Non-USA ANs: European AN (Area Network), International AN
- USA ANs: Alliance AN, Garden State AN, Mosaic AN, Southern California/Nevada AN, Texas AN, US West AN

### Leaders

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### Groups

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### Applicants

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### New Applications

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### Accreditations

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<td>USA ANs</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>291</td>
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<td>283</td>
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How Would You Respond?
Here is an extract from a Leader, written to the CLA, about a mother interested in leadership. Thank you to the LAD representatives who submitted their responses. There is no single right answer. Sharing possible approaches can help us consider how we might choose to respond.

Dear Caroline CLA,

My co-Leader and I are not comfortable recommending a mother who has repeatedly expressed interest in becoming a Leader. She is an enthusiastic advocate for breastfeeding, but at meetings too often she comes across as judgmental toward others, and her comments are sometimes even unkind. It is particularly awkward since two other mothers in the Group have become Applicants. She has posted comments on a local chat group about being discriminated against. How do we gracefully keep saying “no” to this mother when she persists in asking about LLL leadership?

Laura Leader

Sample Responses

Dear Laura Leader,

What a distressing situation for your Group! You ask how to say “no” gracefully. I think that the answer lies in thoroughly discussing and honestly sharing with the mother your reasons for not recommending her for leadership. When the barrier is the personal traits prerequisite, it can be challenging to have that difficult and frank conversation, yet even in such a situation it is possible to remain positive. It is not impossible for her to turn the situation around. Remember that when it comes to communication skills, a willingness to develop skills is all that is required in order to meet the prerequisite and there are opportunities to work on this during the application. Invite her to Communications Skills Development training when it is offered in your area. This could be beneficial to the Group and to her in her personal life, whether or not she ever applies for leadership. At this point she is clearly not ready to apply and her posts on the chat group are evidence of this. Your openness to accepting her in the Group and your willingness to help her to work towards meeting the prerequisites might be the catalyst she needs to turn things around.

Caroline CLA  
(Lesley Robinson, Canada)

Dear Laura,

I suggest that either you or your co-Leader arrange to meet with this mother, at a neutral venue, to talk about her interest in leadership. Bring along a copy of Thinking About LLL Leadership (compact version): http://www.llli.org/docs/lad/thinkingaboutleadership.pdf and a copy of the Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership and the Criteria for Leader Accreditation. Thank her for her interest. Acknowledge that she is an enthusiastic advocate for breastfeeding. Let her know that being a Leader is a job. Like any job there are prerequisites and criteria for applying. Share these with her. Be open and honest about your concerns about her coming across as being judgmental towards others and how her comments are sometimes perceived as unkind. Have some examples of this that you and your co-Leader have agreed on to share with her. It is part of a Leader’s job to empower mothers by offering information and support. A mother will not be open to any information we offer if she feels judged or offended. Gently ask her if she is aware of how she comes across. Is she interested in working on this over the next series of meetings? Share with her that many mothers have found that the constraints of leadership are not for them. Let her know that there are many ways of being effective as a breastfeeding advocate besides being a Leader. Give her the copies you brought to the meeting for her to read at her leisure. Ask her to give some thought to your discussion. Thank her for her time and arrange a further meeting to discuss her thoughts. It is part of our job as Leaders to be open and honest with all mothers who enquire about leadership. Do let me know how you get on.
Dear Laura,

How disconcerting! It seems that saying “no” gracefully hasn’t deterred the mother, so perhaps this situation offers an opportunity for her to learn more about La Leche League. Perhaps most importantly, this is something that needs to be sensitively addressed for the protection of other mothers in the Group and the image of La Leche League in your community, whether or not you ever share your concerns about leadership being a poor match.

One strategy could be to set up a one-to-one meeting to discuss her interest in leadership and let her tell you why she wants to become a Leader. Offering your respect and appreciation for her interest may turn out to be well worth the effort in terms of protecting the Group as a whole.

After letting the mother share her concerns and her interest, and reflecting back to her the frustration and the passion she is exhibiting about helping other mothers, you could share the prerequisites to applying for leadership with her from The Leader’s Handbook. Ensure that she has access to a copy of the prerequisites to review at her leisure by printing them or by giving her the link to Thinking About LLL Leadership (compact version) which can be found at: http://www.llli.org/docs/lad/thinkingaboutleadership.pdf

Whether or not I believe an interested mother meets the prerequisites, when I take the time to go over them with her, she will often recognize her own strengths and weaknesses and bring them up for discussion. If that happens, offer her several ideas for other ways that she could support other breastfeeding mothers, perhaps even by taking on a Group job.

The Acceptance Exercise can be an excellent starting point as a means of helping her recognize the strength of her feelings about certain topics. You can respectfully and sensitively help nudge this mother along a path toward greater sensitivity for others.

If she says she can change and reiterates her desire to be considered for leadership, remind yourself that a final decision and resolution does not need to be made overnight.

If she is still interested in pursuing leadership, along with a Group job, you might also suggest that at the next two or three meetings she not talk, but instead listen very carefully, noting statements with which she disagrees and watching how you or your co-Leader handle them for later discussion. Follow up with her to discuss her perceptions of how things were handled by you or your co-Leader and share your reasoning.

Like acquiring skills in mothering and breastfeeding, paying attention to the feelings of others may require nurturing and time. Encouraging this may be rewarding both personally and within the Group. I hope you are rewarded for your efforts!

Caroline CLA
(Sandy Moore-Furneaux, Germany)
How would you respond? Send your ideas for a reply or an extract you would like to share with other LAD representatives to Alison Parkes, Contributing Editor, at: alisonjparkes@gmail.com

A Taste of LAD

International

Juliet Matthee, South Africa

I have been a Leader for ten years and was the CLA of South Africa for four years. I remember being asked at a conference about six years ago if I wanted to be an ACLA. I have really enjoyed my time with LAD. I always feel very supported by everyone in LAD. I have been able to attend national and international conferences. In my suburb I co-lead Series Meetings.

I live in Cape Town, South Africa, with Giliomee, my husband of 20 years and three children: Karl-Otto (15), Anja (13) and Sané (9). I have been attending La Leche League meetings since Karl-Otto was three months old.

Last year we had a family adventure, cycling through Europe for three months. Spending time as a family is a priority for us. Thank you to La Leche League for teaching me such a lot.

Joan Crothers, USA

I have served as the Regional Administrator of Leader Accreditation (RALA) for the Great Lakes Region of LLL Alliance for Breastfeeding Education, USA, since February of 2012. This means that I support CLAs in the States (Areas) of Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, and both Pennsylvania East and West. In addition to this LAD work, I also serve as an ACLA-at-Large in Future Areas in Asia Africa and the Middle East, where I correspond in English with mothers as they pursue their goal of becoming LLL Leaders.

I have been a Leader for many years and have served LLLI in various capacities. I was a Group Leader, a CLA, a RALA and co-Director of LAD many years ago. I also served on the LLLI Board of Directors and worked in the
Leader Accreditation Department

International Division as editor for its administrator newsletter. LAD work has always been my favorite job and I was happy to return to it several years ago when I retired from education where I had worked as a school administrator.

My husband, Jim, and I raised two sons and are now able to enjoy them and their families despite both living quite far away from us. We live in Rhode Island, which is on the east coast of the United States, and our older son, Josh, lives with his wife Laura and their two children, Grace (12) and Matthew (10) in Arizona, about 2,300 miles (3,700 kilometers) from us. Our other son, Seth, lives with his wife, Kara, and their two sons, Ryan (8) and Evan (4), just north of Washington, DC. They are “only” 340 miles (550 kilometers) away. Fortunately, both Josh and Seth miss the ocean, which is very near our home, and their wives and children love the beach, so both families come to visit for several weeks during the summer and we all have a wonderful time together. Jim and I also travel to visit them, so we get some good grandchildren time with all four.

Traveling to Europe numerous times and to Southeast Asia means I have friends, many of whom I’ve met through LLL, scattered all over the globe. I love working with mothers who love breastfeeding and mothering as I did when I was raising two boys, and I also love supporting CLAs who enjoy LAD work as I do.

Reminder!

How to download the Leader’s Handbook
Go to:
* [http://www.llli.org/leaderpages/leadershandbook](http://www.llli.org/leaderpages/leadershandbook) (LLLID and password required)

Or go to:
  * Click:
    * “Resources”
    * Leaders “Leaders enter here” (LLLID and password required)
    * Downloads
      “Download Tear Off Sheets, Logos, etc”
    * “Leader’s Handbook”

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**Good Idea!**

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### Thinking about your successor

It is not too soon to start thinking about the next CLA as soon as a new CLA is appointed. Is there an ACLA in the Area already who might be willing to apply in five years? If not, it helps to recruit new ACLAs and work on their LAD orientation. The CLA’s LAD support person will be happy to offer helpful guidance. If possible, let the ACLAs experience parts of CLA work. Some CLAs choose to appoint a LAD Secretary and ACLAs could take turns serving in this position. Planning well ahead of time helps make it more likely that there will be candidates who are well prepared to apply for the CLA position when it is time for a new search.

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**on your appointment!**

Lauren Allen  
ACLA, Northern California/Hawaii, USA

Heather Jenkins  
CLA, Area 3, LLLNZ

Kathleen King  
RALA, LAD West, USA

Rika Mitani  
CLA, Japan

Sandy Moore-Furneaux  
CLA, Kansas-Oklahoma, USA

Noelia Moreno  
CLA, Spain

Kathleen Raymond  
CLA, Connecticut, USA

Vicky Reynell  
CLA, South Africa

Lee Shields  
ACLA, Commonwealth, Virginia, USA

Adith Stoneman  
ACLA, Area 1, LLLNZ

Stephanie Sutton  
CLA, Illinois, USA

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**LAD Promenade**

_Congratulations_
Cindy Garrison,
Interim Director of the Leader Accreditation Department

Lesley Robinson and Marie Beam have completed their terms as LAD Council Coordinators. There is no way that I can express my gratitude to them for finding a way to keep the LAD Council functioning, which resulted in LAD representatives and Leaders worldwide being supported so they could help mothers prepare for leadership. Lesley and Marie also upheld LLLI policy in matters of accreditation while maintaining the function and integrity of the Leader Accreditation Department. We are all in the positions we are today thanks to these two amazing women who coordinated the department. We shall miss their wise counsel and clear thinking, yet we know that their enthusiasm for the LAD and for helping breastfeeding mothers and babies will continue. The LAD is the backbone of LLL. Thank you to Lesley and Marie for making sure the LAD, and therefore LLLI, can be here today and in the future.

We feel honored to share messages from the Founders and the co-Chairmen of the LLLI Board of Directors.
Dear Lesley and Marie,

We would like to convey our deepest gratitude to you for your tremendous contributions to La Leche League International throughout more than two decades during which you have been Leaders and served in the Leader Accreditation Department. We are truly impressed by your history with L.L.L.

We can all be very grateful for the many years you have given to helping nursing mothers and babies as well as to supporting Leaders and Applicants. In particular, we truly appreciate the years you embraced the task of working as LAD Council Coordinators while we were going through a transition. We realize that the Leader Accreditation Department is and always has been a vital factor in carrying on the work we began almost 60 years ago. Your efforts were particularly needed during those transitional years. You undoubtedly have been a bridge to the future of L.L.L.

As you now turn over this responsibility to others to carry on, we want you to know that in conjunction with all who worked with you, we will remain deeply grateful to you. Also please be assured that our deepest gratitude and very best wishes always will be with you and your families.

LLLove,
Mary White, Marian Tompson, and Mary Ann Kerwin
co-Founders, La Leche League International

Dear Lesley and Marie,

The L.L.L Board appreciates your consistent dedication to and support of the LAD, a crucial international department at a critical time. It is impossible to measure the impact you have had in the lives of so many mothers and babies. You made a difference and we all thank you for that.

We hope your future endeavors will be as meaningful as you have been to the LAD.

In gratitude,
Linda Anderson and Lydia de Raad
co-Chairmen of the L.L.L Board of Directors

Many Leaders around the globe would also like to share their special thanks.

Sally Allison, New York, USA

Saying thank you doesn’t even begin to express my gratitude to you for all that you both have done and continue to do as LAD representatives. I especially want to thank you for your guidance and support in the last five years during your tenure as the LAD Council Coordinators. I would never have been able to do my work half as effectively had I not been able to come to you for guidance. Marie, you have been my support person directly or indirectly for almost all of my time in the LAD and I have learned so much. Lesley, we have been traveling buddies more than once and I have enjoyed every minute of our time together. You both have generously shared your wisdom, dedication, care and love of L.L.L with me and with everyone you have worked with. I am grateful beyond words.
Linda Wieser, Canada

Lesley, special thanks for all the work you have done as the LAD Council co-Coordinator, in addition to being ALA for LLL Canada. You and Marie kept things together on behalf of the LAD Director. That’s quite an achievement. Your understanding of LLL philosophy continues to inspire me. And then there’s your laugh and joie de vivre. It’s always fun to be around you, especially when you start dancing. I feel privileged to be following you as ALA for LLL Canada. And I’m glad we’ll continue to work together.

Marie, we first met in Frankfurt—what a warm welcome. It made me feel already a part of the LAD Council even before our meetings started. I had heard your name for many years. It was great to finally meet. Thank you for guiding the LAD through some challenging years and keeping everyone organized and focussed. I feel lucky to have joined the LAD Council just as things were changing. Your warmth, organizational skills, devotion to LLL and dance skills are truly remarkable.

Mariana Petersen, Guatemala

*English translation follows*

Gracias Lesley por el apoyo que recibí de ti al empezar el trabajo de ALA. También por el lindo detalle de enviar un regalito por correo para Navidad!
Thank you Lesley for the support I received from you as I started the ALA job. Also for taking the time to make and send a Christmas present!

Marie, el boletín que tu enviabas siempre fue de gran ayuda para orientar a mi equipo de trabajo en LAD. Horizons! Una gran herramienta para comprender el trabajo durante la acredicación de nuevas compañeras!
Marie, the bulletin, which you organised and sent was of great help to me as I was orienting my LAD team. Horizons! A great tool to understand the accreditation procedure for new Leaders!

Allyson Shames, Virginia, USA

Lesley, I joined LAD Council with some trepidation: I was nervous about stepping into a larger role and whether I had the breadth of experience required to be here. Your warm welcome and kind words quickly put my fears to rest. Thank you for all you’ve done on LAD Council—not only in using your experience but also in welcoming new members so warmly as well. Marie, my earliest LAD experiences are linked to working with you back in the days of the Eastern United States. I will dearly miss your presence as my de facto mentor on LAD Council.

Thank you for your mentoring, your encouragement, and your wisdom. Thank you for keeping LLL philosophy foremost. Thank you for your skillful writing and for gently passing on the lessons you’ve learned in your years of experience. All are much appreciated.
Margaret McGuigan, Ireland

Thank you so much to both of you for your warm welcome into the LAD Council. It was wonderful to have already met each of you at the EMS in Frankfurt and have faces to go with the names. I really appreciated your understanding of LLL philosophy and learning from you both on how to explore it with mothers graciously. Your encouraging emails, Skype calls and general support in LAD were very important to me in my new role. You cannot be thanked enough!

Ineke Leiter, the Netherlands

thank you for all your support and all the effort you have put into your work as LAD Council Coordinators! We will miss you!

Marie-Eve Dallaire, Canada

Merci !
(Marie-Eve, Ligue de Lait, Canada)
Linda Dockrill, Aotearoa/New Zealand

Lesley, our purple-loving friend. Thank you so much for all the wisdom, creativity and energy you have poured into your work on the LAD council. Your generous and warm nature has made it easy to learn from you and I have greatly appreciated your one on one support. You are a very talented woman who has much to offer and I feel very grateful that I have had the opportunity to know you, work alongside you, and learn from you. I am going to miss you! Ngā mihi nui (with best wishes).

Marie, I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know you and sharing my LLL journey with you. The depth of your experience and passion for the LAD has been of real benefit to me and the group. I have loved our side conversations and giggles at ourselves and appreciate the total commitment you have shown the LAD Council over the past few years. Without your direction and input it would have been much harder to navigate a shared path the way we have. I wish you well for the future outside of the LAD Council and know that whatever role you are in you will be coming up with great ideas right up until the last minute! Ngā mihi nui (with best wishes).

Toshi Jolliffe, Luxembourg
*with English translation

Thank you for your support as I did my ALA work.
Thank you for your deep understanding of LLL philosophy.
Thank you for supporting the idea of publishing LADDERS.
Thank you for being there for us.
Benafar Bhandari, Great Britain

My dearest Lesley and Marie. Words cannot express my gratitude to you. One very chilly morning I was on my way to the LAD Great Britain (GB) meeting with a 13-year-old Furdy, as he couldn’t hear to not see me all day. I turned to Furdy and said “Oh, for goodness sake—what is the matter with me! LLLLGB needs the new LAD Administrator and I have run out of excuses as to why I shouldn’t step up.” That was that decision made. At the time I had no idea that that decision would lead to being on the LAD Council and meeting you both. I had no idea of the degree to which my life would be enhanced, by having you in my life. We bonded so much at the LAD Council meeting in Philadelphia in 2013 and that bond was made so strong a year later in Frankfurt. I have laughed and cried with you, I have understood how I feel about being a mother and daughter through you, I have deepened my love of LLL because of you. Thank you, thank you xx

Nancy Spahr, Indiana, USA

Many thanks to you both for the outstanding work you did to keep LAD and LAD Council together through a challenging time! I know you spent untold hours thinking, considering, offering information and support to LAD representatives, Leaders, and Applicants with the goal of providing the best preparation possible for future Leaders. I have always believed that LAD is the backbone of LLLI and that it is LLL philosophy that has given LLL its unique place among breastfeeding organizations. I can imagine that your quest for excellence and your personal examples have inspired countless Leaders, Applicants, and LAD representatives—most likely too many to count. Thank you for caring so much!

Eleanor Becker, New Zealand

Although I have never met you in person I feel as if I really know you both. Thank you, for your wisdom, support and encouragement that I enjoyed during my time on the LAD Council. I know that you will be dearly missed on the council and I wish you both all the very best for the future. If you and/or your families are ever in New Zealand please know that you have a warm welcome waiting for you.
Rita Schroeder, Luxembourg
*English translation follows

Je ne suis pas de ceux qui font beaucoup de mots, mais je dois dire que j’ai toujours apprécié vos contributions, et ceci pendant de longues années, au moins depuis les trois derniers Congrès LLLL. Je me rappelle en particulier du dernier en 2007, où nous avions des réunions LAD dans la chambre pendant lesquelles l’humour était roi. Nous avions également pu assister à divers EMS. Malheureusement je n’avais pas pu assister au dernier, mais Toshi avait réussi à organiser une brève rencontre à Luxembourg qui reste encore aujourd’hui un point culminant pour moi. De tout mon cœur je vous remercie pour les beaux moments que nous avons pu passer ensemble et pour tout ce que vous avez fait pour le LAD, aussi bien localement qu’au niveau international, envoyant des vagues jusqu’au bout du monde.

I am not a person of many words but I must say that I have always appreciated your input, especially since the last two or three LLLL Conferences. I have very fond memories of the last conference in 2007, when the LAD meetings in our room were accompanied by great humour. We also met at several EMS meetings. I was not able to attend the last EMS but Toshi arranged a brief meeting in Luxembourg which remains a highlight for me. With all my heart I say Thank You for the great moments we spent together and for all that you have done for LAD, locally and internationally, and for all the ripples which have spread so far around the world.

Silvia Barco, Argentina
*English translation follows

Mis queridas Lesley and Marie...o...Marie and Lesley....realmente es igual el orden de sus nombres porque se complementaron y formaron un gran equipo de soporte para LAD en momentos difíciles para toda LLL. Ustedes dos supieron poner mucho amor, ánimo, valentía, tiempo y dedicación para unir y sostener al LAD Council. Miles de Gracias por tanta dedicación, por acompañarme y saber aconsejarme siempre, por tantos momentos de alegrías vividas juntas (como el recuerdo de estas fotos!!) y ajalá nos volvamos a encontrar en este camino de LLL que nos une hace tantos años y desde tantos lugares diferentes del mundo. Mi casa en Argentina las espera siempre!!

Cariños y Abrazos

2013 LDS, Philadelphia, USA

Marie and Lesley... or should it be Lesley and Marie? The order of your names doesn't really matter because you worked together and made a wonderful support team for the LAD during challenging times. You both gave remarkable devotion, drive, courage, time and commitment in support of the LAD Council. Many, many thanks for so much dedication, for all the help and support you gave me and for all the happy moments together—just look at these photos! I really hope that we can meet again through LLL, which brought us together so many years ago and in so many parts of the world. You will always be welcome at my home in Argentina.

LLLove and Hugs
Laurence Kher Descourteux, Great Britain

*English translation follows*

Merci Marie et Lesley pour votre aide, votre soutien, votre disponibilité et votre incroyable gentillesse. Vous avez toujours été là, patientes, alors que je me doute que vous étiez déjà super occupées. Au-delà de tout cela, votre capacité à mettre le doigt sur les points essentiels et ainsi qu’à envisager les choses sous un angle nouveau m’ont permis de développer ma compréhension du travail au LAD tout le temps que j’ai cheminé auprès de vous. Pour tout cela, pour les bons moments passés ensemble, merci ! Je vous souhaite de continuer votre route, pleine de belles rencontres.

Thank you Marie and Lesley for your help, your support, your availability and your amazing kindness. You were always patient, although I guess you were already super busy. Beyond all that, your capacity to put your finger on the key points and to see things from a different angle have helped me develop my understanding of LAD work. For all this, for the good moments we spent together, thank you! I wish you to continue your path, full of beautiful encounters.

Amy Shaw, Massachusetts, USA

Special thanks to Lesley for your many years on LAD Council. Your enthusiasm, keen insights, wisdom, and wit have served to inspire and entertain so many of us! Marie, you have been a dear friend, sister LADdie, and an important part of the EUS/LLL Alliance Area Network. We have shared many discussions, brainstorming sessions, and found fun ways to let our hair down together. Thanks for your years of service to LAD Council! And of course I will always hold dear the picture of the two of you dancing and playing at the 2013 LLL Alliance Leader Development Seminar. Raising my glass to the two of you!
Lori Bryan, California, USA

You started out as names I sent emails to and then became friends as we worked together on LAD issues! Your insights, second opinions, editing help, and consultations have been invaluable. However when I think about you, it's the times we were together in person that stand out—sharing rooms at conferences and Toshi’s "pink house": being tourists, sharing great food, computer work around the table with the fire blazing and laughing together. Thanks for the memories Lesley and Marie! May there be many more!
Eileen Harrison, France

We have known each other a long time and I am sure both know how much I value the work you have done for LAD, as well as the many personal contacts we have had and continue to have. Marie, I remember you from the first LLLI Conference we both attended and have seen you develop into the confident administrator you are today. Lesley, I have observed your whole journey to date in LLL and LAD and am especially happy to see that you took on board my thought about having more time for LLL as the children grow! Your support of Applicants across Canada and around the world is very much appreciated. Blue, it seems, is currently the colour.

Alison Parkes, Great Britain

Lesley, you always lifted our spirits with your sense of humour and your instinct for outrageous fun. We gained so much from your artistic talents and your sensitive insights into mothering through breastfeeding. In your company, we felt at the centre of what really mattered.

Marie, your powers of organisation kept LAD Council on track over many a meeting! You would prepare a detailed agenda, which you would casually appear to abandon. At the end of the meeting, we would be amazed to discover we had discussed everything on the agenda in depth. By adeptly steering our conversation, you made sure everyone contributed freely to the discussion—a real gift! Your dedication to the LAD has inspired us all.

Karin Gausman, Colorado, USA

During the various changes in LLL over the years, LAD has been the constant that nourished the heart of LLL. Even when numbers of Leaders and Groups continued to decline, application numbers increased. When the LAD found itself without a LAD Director in 2010, many of us wondered what would happen to LAD. Thanks to a strong commitment from the two of you, LAD continued to function in ways we have found most productive, with “point persons” to coordinate our work and provide support. Although with a different title, you two dedicated LAD representatives graciously took over the responsibilities of a LAD Director (DLAD). Your enthusiasm and positive outlook guided LAD. A future DLAD will inherit a department that is running smoothly and effectively, thanks to you. We owe you a debt we cannot repay. Thank you, thank you!
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