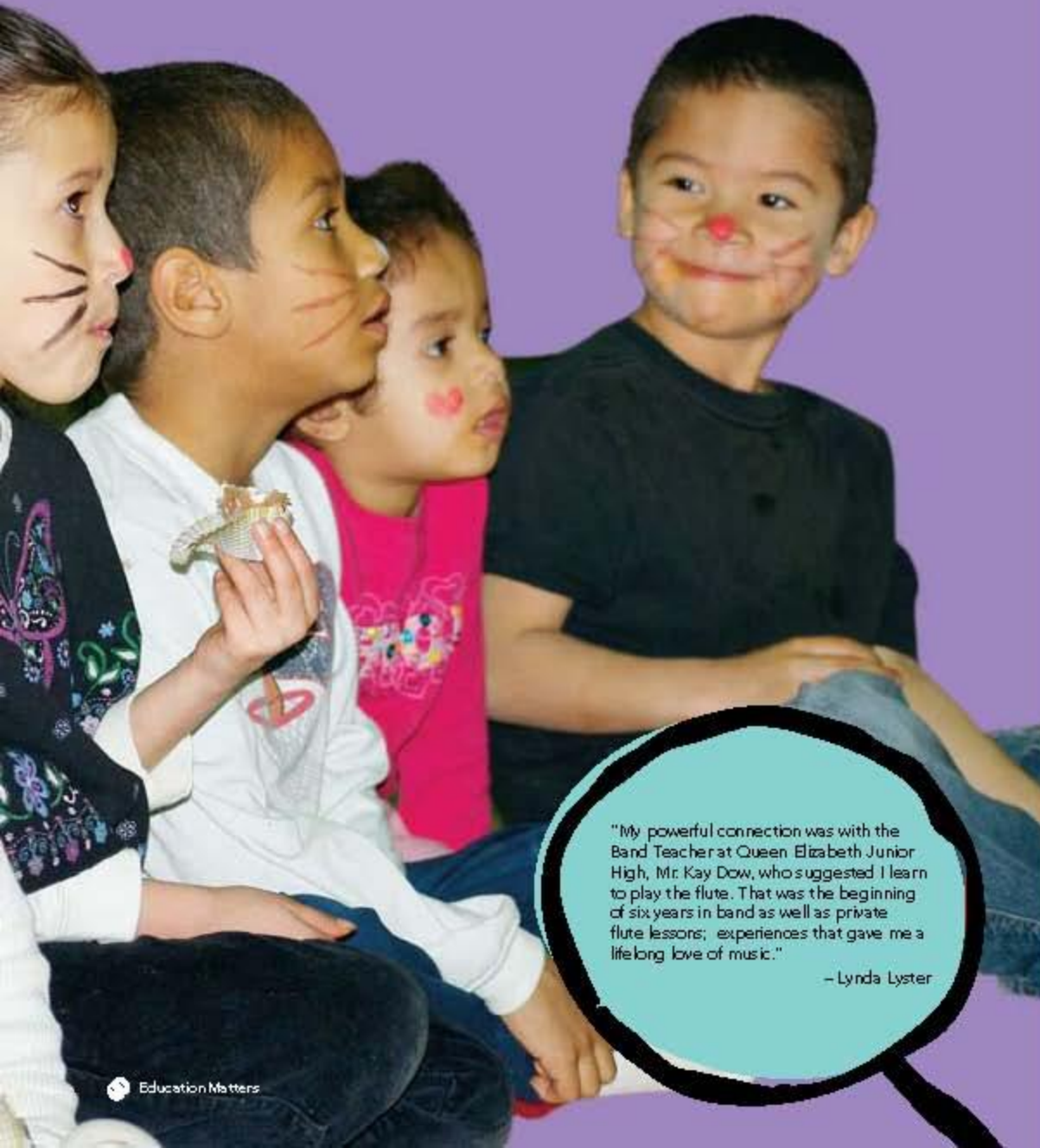


CORPORATE DONOR STORY

The business of connecting to the



"My powerful connection was with the Band Teacher at Queen Elizabeth Junior High, Mr. Kay Dow, who suggested I learn to play the flute. That was the beginning of six years in band as well as private flute lessons; experiences that gave me a lifelong love of music."

— Lynda Lyster

future

Who are the future? Our youth. How do we ensure their future is bright? Education. How does one oil company support the youth in the communities it serves? By investing in education.

The Imperial Oil Foundation places a high priority on support for Aboriginal youth so they will complete school. The Foundation knows the dropout rate for Aboriginal students needs to be reduced. Aboriginal and immigrant youth, the workforce of tomorrow, make up 40 per cent of the population.

"Our focus is primarily on math and science education programs, but when EducationMatters approached us about the Calgary Board of Education's Aboriginal Families Learning Together Literacy program, we knew it was a good fit," explained Monica Samper, President, Imperial Oil Foundation. "The program connected an important community need with our company's interests."

Piloted at Erin Woods School in 2007-2008, the Aboriginal Families Learning Together program brings families together after school to improve student literacy skills and to provide parents/caregivers with supports to guide their children through the learning process. It's a win-win situation and it's succeeding. Students' reading levels went up an average of one grade level in year one. Parents in the program also praised the quality time for families.

"The kids feel special and share in something the parents are doing. The supper was great and we had a chance to talk to other families. The kids were learning and were happy." (a parent testimonial in the 2008-2009 program)



The Imperial Oil Foundation committed \$20,000 over two years to support the program. The Burns Memorial Fund also provided a seed grant. Their donation helps develop culturally specific learning materials, cover the cost of meals, elder gifts, transportation and caregivers for the younger children.

"EducationMatters identified the need. They are purposeful in the work they do for students," says Samper. "Supporting these Aboriginal students makes good business sense and it's the right thing to do."

Connecting this business to the youth of the future also makes good sense. Students will succeed and communities will become more vibrant.

Imperial Oil Foundation  Fondation l'Impériale

The Imperial Oil Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Imperial Oil Ltd., one of Canada's largest corporations and a leading member of the petroleum industry.