

FY2016 Literacy Grant Program Statistical Summary Report

Literacy Need

The most recent census information indicates that of the 12.6 million Illinois residents, an estimated 2.1 million (16.6 percent) need adult literacy and/or English language instruction. Of those who speak a language other than English, 1.1 million (40.7 percent) report that they speak English less than very well. These numbers only reflect some of the Illinois residents who could benefit from English language instruction.

The survey further indicates that 471,000 (5.5 percent), of the 8.5 million Illinois residents over age 25, have less than a ninth-grade education. Additionally, another 590,000 (6.9 percent) residents have between a ninth-grade and 12th-grade education. Combined, the numbers indicate that 1 million (12.4 percent) of the population over age 25 do not have a high school diploma. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.)

Illinois State Library Meeting the Literacy Need

The Secretary of State and State Librarian is committed to ensuring that all Illinois citizens have access to quality literacy programs that set them on the path to lifelong learning. The Adult Literacy Grant Program was established by Section 7.2 of the State Library Act [[15 ILCS 320/7.2](#)] to develop, expand or support adult, family and workplace literacy programs in Illinois. In FY2016, the Illinois General Assembly appropriated \$2.05 million to this purpose.

Literacy grants enable educational agencies to provide reading, writing, math, and/or English language instruction to adults who lack basic academic skills. Illinois State Library's Adult Literacy grant programs provide instruction in three categories of service to address the varying needs of the low-literate or limited English proficient residents of Illinois. These categories are: Adult Volunteer Literacy, Penny Severns Family Literacy and Workplace Skills Enhancement.

FY2016 Literacy Program Statistics:	
Number of Programs:	57
Amount Awarded:	\$2,049,997
Total learners served:	7,866
Instructional hours provided:	541,891

Adult Volunteer Literacy Grant Program

In Adult Volunteer Literacy projects, a trained volunteer tutor teaches a low literate or limited English proficient adult. Grant dollars enable agencies to make such a program operational.

This program has run continuously since 1985 and has granted approximately \$134 million to hundreds of agencies to provide adult volunteer literacy programs.

In FY2016, 28 programs received \$1,210,228 and reported the following results:

Adult Student Statistics

- 6178 students served.
- Average student age was 40.
- 68 percent were female.
- 60 percent of the adult learners were employed.
- 59 percent of the students studied English as a Second Language.

Volunteer Statistics

- 3,216 volunteer tutors.
- 76 percent of the volunteer tutors were female.
- The average age was 55.
- Volunteer tutors averaged 15.5 hours in pre-service training and 5 hours in further training. Volunteer tutors provided \$5,497,893 of service according to the Independent Sector, which equates volunteer service at \$ 25.34 per hour in Illinois.

FY16 Adult Volunteer Literacy Testimonial

Richland Community College, Decatur

An adult learner related to the staff of Project Read that she felt like she was, "dangling from the end of a rope, tying knots and trying to hang on." She had experienced years of teasing and being called names because of her abilities and in the end had accepted the characterization. The years of being told that she wasn't smart, even by members of her own family, had an adverse effect on her psyche and manifested into nightmares, not being able to keep jobs and eventually the end of her marriage.

The learner made the decision to change her life and enrolled in a high school equivalency class but soon found that she had trouble understanding the material because she could not read most of the words. She worked hard at trying to stay up with the class but soon dropped out due to the embarrassment of her failures. She then heard about a program at the Decatur Public Library for adults wanting to learn to read and improve themselves through education. She came to Project READ in May of 2015 and met with the program's literacy specialist who noted that the adult learner was insecure about everything, specifically math and didn't lack the intelligence to succeed just the knowledge.

She was soon matched with a tutor and began her journey into learning starting out with math facts and basic addition. Her tutor soon noticed that the learner loved working with numbers and struggled in the beginning but quickly advanced into more complex math problems such as percents, ratios and proportions. Her success with math has changed her entire outlook and she has decided to continue on with her high school equivalency class once she finishes at Project Read.

The learner's tutor says this about her, "She has blessed me, and I love watching her grow. She has always been open, eager and ready, but I can't believe how far she has come in one year. I love seeing how her problem-solving and critical thinking skills have developed and her success with math has changed her whole being." Thanks to Project Read and the opportunity for her to get the one-to-one tutoring she needed, she has progressed nearly three and a half grade levels in one year.

Penny Severns Family Literacy Grant Program

The only program of its type in Illinois, Penny Severns Family Literacy projects require three community organizations; an adult education provider, a child at risk agency and a public library, to work together to provide instruction to low literate adults and children as a family group. The program mandates participation in five components of instruction: adult education, child education, parenting education, library services, and parent and child together activities. Library Services are unique to this program.

Running continuously since 1993, this program has provided almost \$29.1 million dollars to fund 912 family literacy projects that have engaged the whole family and increased the academic skills of more than 70,500 adults and children.

In FY2016, 24 programs received \$772,769 and reported the following results:

Adult Student Statistics

- 630 adults served.
- 93 percent of the adults were female.
- 75 percent of the adults studied English as a Second Language.
- Average age of the adult student was 30.
- 45 percent obtained a library card.
- Average adult education hours were 92.
- Average parent education hours were 17.3.

Child Student Statistics

- 882 children served.
- Average age was 4.5.
- Average adult/child activity time together was about 20.5 hours.
- Average child alone activity hours was 249.6.

FY16 Penny Severns Family Literacy Testimonial

Asian Human Services, Chicago

A mother and first grader from Pakistan enrolled in the School Age Family Literacy Program. Both of them have been positively impacted by the program over the course of the year. Mom was enrolled in morning intensive ESL classes, seeking to improve her reading and writing skills. She has made great strides since she enrolled early in the fiscal year and raised her performance on the CASAS a SPL level from high beginning to intermediate low.

Her son entered the Family Literacy Program doing quite poorly both academically and behaviorally. He was reading below grade level, and both the tutors in the program and his elementary school teacher struggled to manage his behavior so that he could begin to improve his reading skills. The tutors, program coordinator, his teacher, and mother all worked together over the course of the school year to share teaching strategies and provide consistent expectations for his work and his behavior. At one point in the year, the program coordinator assisted mom in starting the process of having her son evaluated by his school for special education services. Throughout everything his mother has been engaged in any way possible in being an advocate for her son including looking into private tutoring, asking his teacher questions, and being involved with conferences with the program coordinator. In addition, both mother and child have engaged in all five components of the School Age Family Literacy Program.

Due to the partnership of all the different stakeholders in this case, mother and child have made great changes. The child's teacher and his tutors now report that his behavior has improved and he is reading basic early fluency books and is more excited about reading than he ever has been before. Mom continues to improve her reading and writing skills and support her son.

Workplace Skills Enhancement Program

Workplace Skills Enhancement projects provide assessment and instructional services to low literate or limited English proficient employees at the worksite. This program is unique because its services reach adult learners who would not be able to access other instructional settings because of their work schedules. In addition, each participating employer/business must match dollar for dollar the amount of grant award.

Since the program's inception in FY90, 684 different Illinois businesses have conducted 1,124 projects and provided instructional services to over 40,000 Illinois workers. Since FY90, Illinois businesses have at a minimum provided \$11.2 million in local funds for this program.

In FY2016, 5 programs received \$67,000 and reported the following results:

Employee/Student Statistics

- 176 employees instructed.
- 46.5 percent of the students were female.
- Average age of employees was 39.
- 84.6 percent of the employees studied English as a Second Language.

Why employees want to participate in Basic Skills Training

- They will be less reliant on translators and more confident in communicating with supervisors and co-workers.
- They will use skills learned in the classes not only at work but in their daily lives.
- They will be eligible for promotions that become available.

Why employers want to participate in Basic Skills Training

- Employees are better able to communicate with immediate supervisors and to participate and contribute in work team activities.
- Providing classes that improve employees' basic skills lifts not only the workers but the community as a whole.
- Promotion of individuals who have participated in the classes result in improved morale, less turnover and greater interest in additional training.

FY16 Workplace Skills Enhancement Testimonial

Carl Buddig and Company, South Holland

Educational Provider: South Suburban College – Business and Career Institute

Carl Buddig and Company with its educational partner South Suburban College has participated in the Secretary of State's Workplace Skills Enhancement Program consecutively for the past 11 years. The company's objective is to offer continued and consistent training and education to its associates in order to increase communication skills while also increasing opportunities for advancement. The company continues to grow with the acquisition of new product lines and new clients. The growth has allowed the company to grow its workforce and also provide existing associates the opportunity to assume more responsibility which translates into higher pay.

The impact of the training on the company has been very beneficial and has allowed associates the opportunity to work and learn. Statistics collected by the company show that as a result of the training, fewer production errors have been recorded and there has been an increased understanding and knowledge of English, translating into better company-wide communication. Supervisors have noted that self confidence, motivation, productivity and the use of English has increased as a result of the classes. The associates have expressed that the opportunity to advance their knowledge has built a better relationship between the company and its workers.

Support Services

Literacy Services in Correctional Facilities

Three Adult Volunteer Literacy grant programs provided tutoring services in three correctional facilities. 107 students were served in a correctional setting. 33 inmates served as peer tutors in facilities around the state.

Literacy Services in Libraries

Public libraries throughout Illinois played a major role in educating adult learners. Twenty-five adult literacy programs assisted 1,041 adult learners to obtain library cards. Eight literacy programs indicated that forty-eight public libraries provided overhead support for literacy projects. Twenty-six literacy programs reported that 220 libraries provided tutoring space. Twenty-two literacy programs shared that 122 libraries offered special collections for adult learners. Twenty-five literacy programs stated that 205 libraries provided recruitment and referral. Some libraries partner with multiple literacy programs.

Illinois Literacy Newsletter

This quarterly publication provides the public with literacy program information. It may highlight program and/or learner accomplishments. It provides useful resources and a calendar of literacy related events and educational opportunities. The newsletter is published online and has an email distribution list of 504 individuals.

Adult New Reader Book Club Collections

These circulating book collections provide projects with book collections to enable programs to conduct adult new reader book clubs. Twenty-one different titles are available. Each book collection contains 20 copies of a title and a Discussion Leader Guide that contains background information about the author and book as well as discussion questions. Twenty book club collections were borrowed by literacy projects during FY2016.

Story Kits

The Story Kits are packaged, participatory family literacy program activities for parents and children to do together and are based on children's literature and focused on reading strategies. Twenty-three different children's titles are available. Each story kit provides multiple copies of one title of children literature and most of the needed materials and instructions to implement a facilitated, literacy activity based on that book for the family groups. Twelve story kits were borrowed by literacy projects during FY2016.

Adult Literacy Volunteer Tutor Training

This tutoring training provides a web-based training alternative to the 12-hour face-to-face training required before volunteer tutor trainers can be matched with an adult learner in Secretary of State funded Adult Volunteer Literacy grant programs.

FY 2016 Adult Literacy Grant Service Locations Outside of Cook County



