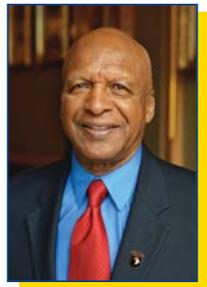


Jesse White
Secretary of State
& State Librarian

Since 1986, the Illinois State Library Literacy Office has administered grant programs to literacy agencies providing funds to assist Illinois citizens who lack the necessary literacy skills or fluency in English to succeed in society. My office is proud to continue this effort each year statewide.



Despite the amount of funding cuts to numerous programs in Illinois over the last two years, our literacy programs have persevered. I appreciate the opportunity to share success stories from select organizations to demonstrate the extensive need for these programs.

In this issue you will be introduced to four individuals who have provided more than 100 years of combined service tutoring adult learners in need of literacy assistance. I cannot fully express my gratitude to these volunteers, as well as the thousands of other tutors around the state that selflessly help those in need.

Jesse White

Jesse White
Secretary of State & State Librarian

Secretary White awards more than \$3.6 million to literacy projects

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White recently awarded \$3,648,873 to 89 literacy projects in Illinois. These projects have 257 different service locations in Cook County, including the city of Chicago, and 618 service locations throughout the rest of the state. More than 12,000 adult learners will be served in 59 Illinois counties. In addition, nearly 800 children will participate in the Penny Severns Family Literacy Grant program. The descriptions of the awards are as follows:

Adult Volunteer Literacy

\$2,887,879 was awarded to 62 projects that provide training to nearly 6,000 volunteers who tutor adults over age 17 who read, write, compute or comprehend below the ninth-grade level or score below SPL 7 for non-native English speakers.

Penny Severns Family Literacy

\$697,999 was awarded to 21 programs that provide parents and children, individually and together, instructional services to enhance their basic reading, math, writing or language skills. Grants are awarded to partnerships that include an adult literacy provider, a public library and a child-at-risk organization.



An adult learner and volunteer tutor working together at Fishes & Loaves literacy program in Springfield.

Workplace Skills Enhancement

\$62,995 was awarded to six businesses that offer employees onsite instructional services to enhance their basic reading, math, writing or language skills. This enables them the opportunity to maintain their employment and increase their eligibility for promotion. Grants are matched dollar-for-dollar by the participating businesses.

To subscribe to *Illinois Literacy*, call 217-785-6921 or 800-665-5576 (Illinois only), #3.

Fiscal Year 2017 Literacy Program statistics and success stories

Fiscal Year 2017 final reports submitted by programs funded through the State Library Literacy Office revealed statistics, as well as success stories from each program.

Adult Volunteer Literacy

- 5,941 adult learners were served
- Average age of adult learner was 41
- 59 percent of adult learners were studying English as a Second Language (ESL)
- 3,278 volunteers served adult learners
- Average age of a volunteer tutor was 53
- Volunteer tutors provided 147,758 hours of tutoring instruction, which equates to \$3,834,337 of service when measured against the Independent Sector

Success Story: *Dominican Literacy Center, Aurora*

In 2014, an immigrant from Mexico arrived at the Dominican Literacy Center and was quickly matched with a tutor. Despite possessing practically no English language skills, she had a desperate desire to learn. She worked with her tutor faithfully and began to believe that she could learn this new language. The pair continued to meet throughout the summer break when the center was closed.

During her second year, she smiled more often as she watched herself blossom as an individual and a student. Now able to speak English without being prompted, she began attending citizenship classes to achieve her goal of becoming an American citizen.

Upon completion of her third year, she read a letter aloud at a gathering of Center participants, staff and tutors — “It has been hard living in a different country with a different language. It’s hard because in my hometown I was someone, a leader in my school who loved to speak in front of people. I have always been a strong, brave and determined woman. But here, it’s different. I started to feel really bad, as if I was nothing. I was feeling fear, shame, frustration and sadness. So, thank you for being here; thank you for giving us a little of your time. Thank you because for you, we are someone; we exist. Every one of you is our heroes. You are helping immigrants by teaching us how to get ahead in this country. Thanks, thanks, thanks!”

Penny Severns Family Literacy

- 412 adult learners served
- 90 percent of adults were female
- 75 percent were adult learners studying ESL
- Average age of an adult learner was 32
- 261 participants obtained a library card
- 554 children served
- Average age of children served was 4

Success Story: *Universidad Popular, Chicago*

A mother entered the program with her son, who was clinically

diagnosed with delayed social, motor, visual motor and sensory processing skills. She had taken him to other programs, but he never adjusted well enough to participate. When she initially brought him to the program, he could not stop crying and laid on the floor. Story time aggravated him, and he refused to participate in class activities with the other children. A change in the boy occurred when the class created a 10 Little Monkeys felt board. This project was designed to encourage children’s creativity allowing them to develop a new appreciation for song and story time.

Slowly, he began to come out of his shell each time the class sang 10 Little Monkeys and within a month he had learned to count from one to ten. He no longer cried when his mother left and would walk into the classroom alone confidently. He began to sing with the rest of the children during story time, sit and paint with the rest of the class. He continued to progress throughout the year. By the end of the program he was able to better express himself; instead of simply pointing at objects, he began using words to describe them. As a result of their progress in the program, the mother felt confident enough to obtain a part-time job. She no longer felt that her son would be unable to adjust to a new environment.

Workplace Skills Enhancement

- 165 employees received instruction
- 48 percent of instructed employees were female
- Average age of employee was 42
- 88 percent of employees studied ESL

Success Story: *Land O’Frost, Inc., Lansing; Educational Partner: South Suburban College, Business and Career Institute, Oak Forest*

Land O’Frost’s company objective is to provide non-native English speaking employees the opportunity to become effective in their ability to communicate in the workplace, as well as their personal lives. The company is the third-largest processor of luncheon meats and specialty meat items in the U.S. It is a family-owned business that began as a small lunch meat processor on the South Side of Chicago. In 1969, its headquarters and manufacturing facilities relocated to Lansing. Over the last two years, the company has consolidated production to Lansing after closing its other production facility in Nebraska. The company has introduced new automated equipment into various production areas at its plant. This expansion has demanded that a higher level of communication needed to occur in order to facilitate continued company growth.

The English as a Second Language classes have provided the opportunity for workers to improve their communication skills in English and have a better understanding of new equipment operation. The classes have resulted in the overall improve-

(Cont. on pg. 5)

Volunteer tutors: The backbone of literacy

In 1986, the Secretary of State's Literacy Office began awarding Adult Volunteer Literacy grants to agencies around the state. Since then, numerous Illinois citizens have volunteered to tutor adult learners in need. The countless number of hours these individuals have contributed over the last 31 years is demonstrative of their unwavering dedication. Without these volunteers, adult learners throughout the state would struggle to find a way to avoid the pitfalls that accompany low literacy.

"My office and literacy programs around the state depend on the selfless dedication of volunteer tutors to help those with literacy needs," explained Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White. "Each year thousands of low-literate Illinois citizens are able to receive help thanks to these individuals, and for that I am truly thankful."

The following stories highlight the dedication of four volunteer tutors who have individually provided many years of loyal service to their local literacy programs:

Gail Rice, SAFER Foundation/PACE Institute, Chicago

Gail Rice has been working in adult literacy for 45 years as an adult basic education teacher, tutor, trainer, workshop presenter, author and consultant. In 1979, after serving as an adult basic education teacher for seven years at the Urbana Adult Education Center, Gail and her husband moved to the south Chicago suburbs where Gail began tutoring at the Programmed Activities for Correctional Education (PACE) program at the Safer Foundation. PACE exclusively serves incarcerated individuals by providing them with educational training while in prison.

"What thrills me the most is, as they learn, they gain skills," said Rice. "Not only do they learn the skills, but their attitude about themselves changes. They begin to think they can go out into the world and succeed and not have to commit another crime to survive."

Gail feels that the stigma inmates carry and the view society has about prisoners or ex-offenders destroy the self-concept of an individual. She believes that incarcerated individuals thrive when someone shows he/she cares by



Marcia Flaherty a volunteer tutor at Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley.

helping them achieve something positive in their lives.

In 1997, Gail suffered a tragic loss in her family when her brother, a Denver, CO, police officer, was shot in the line of duty. The tragic death of her brother did not cause her to waiver from her dedication to volunteering with inmates. "It hasn't changed my conviction that these people are so precious and so valuable, and I will work every day to try to get them to see it," said Rice. "My brother's murder did not change that."

As a result of her brother's death, Gail has become involved with other murder victims' family members and is committed to restorative justice and criminal justice reform. She was part of a group that fought for the abolition of the death penalty in Illinois in 2011 and often speaks to groups concerning her experiences and beliefs. "Volunteering is so rewarding that I want to get other people involved."

Gail has worked in several divisions at SAFER Foundation/PACE Institute with both men and women detainees. In 1999, she joined the PACE Board of Managers. She is still an active leader of PACE.

Marcia Flaherty, Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley, St. Charles

In 1991, Marcia Flaherty trained as a volunteer tutor. Marcia was not a teacher by trade and spent her early career developing new frozen food products for Wilson & Co. at the Chicago Union Stockyards. After teaching at a cooking school in Morton Grove and working with high-risk Native American teens at a Wisconsin high school, Marcia found a new calling. "I am so

(Cont. on pg. 4)



Irene Williams, grant consultant

New staff member joins Literacy Office

The Illinois State Library is pleased to announce that Irene Williams has joined the Literacy Office and will be based out of the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago. Irene earned a master's degree in human resources development from Northeastern University in 2001 and a master's degree in library and information science from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in 2008. She served as a visiting information science librarian in 2009 at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Library of the Health Sciences, working as a paraprofessional for many years. She also worked as an adjunct librarian for the City Colleges of Chicago, most recently at Malcolm X Carter G. Woodson Library. Irene went on to become the network services coordinator for the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Greater Midwest Region, overseeing the Resource Sharing DOCLINE program and in charge of reviewing grant applications for funding professional development awards. Irene will serve as a liaison to the Chicago literacy programs, as well as programs in the northern part of the state.



eager to share, and that is part of being a teacher — sharing what you know,” said Flaherty.

Marcia teaches intuitively by listening for student interests, thinking about how she can hold the student’s attention, building confidence and sensing when the student is on overload. “Their facial expressions let you know when they have had enough. You learn to read their eyes and tone.”

Marcia has worked with countless adults throughout her 26 years of volunteer service. She is currently teaching an East Indian woman to expand her vocabulary. “I’m teaching her idioms and how a group of words can have one meaning.” When Marcia casually remarked that it rained cats and dogs, the student’s confused expression indicated that she had a lesson to teach.

Leadership is a talent of Marcia’s, and she uses that skill as a volunteer for students post-testing. She feels it gives her a chance to meet with other tutors and observe the wonderful things they are accomplishing with their adult learners. In this role, she is able to share teaching strategies and discuss issues that other tutors are encountering. “I love that they feel secure enough to talk with me,” Flaherty explains. “It builds my confidence as much as it builds their confidence.”

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley considers Marcia a key volunteer. Peg Coker, executive director, said, “She represents us in the best possible way. She is one of those selfless volunteers who never stops giving.”

Nancy Dorsey, Read to Learn Adult Literacy Program, Township School District 214, Arlington Heights

Nancy Dorsey has been tutoring for the Read to Learn Adult Literacy Program since January 1992. As of July 2017, she had contributed 2,342 hours as a tutor and is a gold member of the program’s Club of Honor. She grew up on the North Side of Chicago. She attended North Park College and received her master’s degree from Northwestern University in Evanston. She taught high school geometry and calculus for 31 years and has been retired for several years.

Nancy states that she has a genuine love of people and that her greatest joy is teaching her students about American culture and customs. She cultivates friendships, recognizing that she has become so close to some of her students that they treat her like family. One of Nancy’s favorite activities is inviting students to her home to teach them about cooking and American customs. “Most of her students are non-native English speakers,” says Laurie Hoffman from Read to Learn. “She finds innovative ways for them to learn skills required to integrate into a new community, such as making phone calls for information, ordering food at a restaurant or simply participating in casual conversations with native speakers.”

In addition to tutoring, Nancy also volunteers at her church and serves on a scholarship committee that provides assistance for those who are seeking to obtain their U.S. citizenship. This summer the committee assisted two individuals in obtaining their citizenship. Nancy is personally working with another individual toward this goal.



Adult learner Soori Sugimoto (left) and volunteer tutor Nancy Dorsey (right).



Adult learner Vera Bekker (left) and volunteer tutor Carol Liner (right).

“Throughout the years, Nancy has made a great impact on the lives of so many adult learners,” says Hoffman. “She continues to tutor with the same passion and enthusiasm as she did when she began more than 25 years ago.”

Carol Liner, Oakton Community College, Skokie

When Carol Liner read an article inviting volunteers to join a literacy program for adults at Oakton Community College, she was excited. Carol was among the first group of volunteers to complete the training under the leadership of the program’s first manager, Marilyn Antonik.

Carol accepted her new responsibility with enthusiasm and commitment, enjoying the challenge of meeting the educational needs of a variety of learners. Throughout the years, using laughter while learning has been a key component to her success as a tutor. Carol is able to adapt quickly and adjust her lessons when her learners are struggling with a particular concept. Her approach has been described as joyful and she always strives to help her learners to the absolute best of her abilities.

For Carol, 26 years of volunteering have flown by almost without notice. “She keeps coming back because she loves the experience of meeting all

(Cont. on pg. 5)

2017 Literacy Program statistics — (Cont. from pg. 2)

ment of skills for 32 employees. According to company representatives, these individuals have increased their use of English language vastly, with noticeable improvements in speaking and pronunciation. They also report that class participants demonstrated improvements in writing and understanding directions. Land O’Frost, in partnership with South Suburban College’s Business and Career Institute, has been a consistent Workplace Skills Enhancement Grant participant since 2009.

Correctional Facilities

Offering literacy tutoring in correctional facilities opens the door to educational opportunities for incarcerated individuals — for some, it even offers an opportunity to provide training to their fellow inmates. To participate in the program, participants must score below the ninth-grade level in reading, writing and math; or speak English below the SPL 7 level.

- Four literacy programs provided adult basic education or ESL instruction in local correctional facilities; one program provided literacy instruction at one state facility; and one program worked with one federal facility
- 277 adult learners qualified and became students
- Six inmates whose skills exceeded high school levels became peer tutors

Adult Literacy, Public Library Partnerships

Public libraries throughout Illinois played a major role in educating adult learners. Literacy programs rely on libraries for a full array of library services, and many libraries are providing services to more than one literacy program. In FY17, libraries and literacy programs worked together to achieve the following results:

- 27 adult literacy programs assisted 1,410 adult learners in obtaining library cards
- 42 libraries provided overhead support for Secretary of State funded literacy projects
- 125 libraries offered special collections for adult learners
- 198 libraries provided tutoring space for literacy volunteers to work with adult learners
- 168 libraries provided recruitment and referral of adult learners to literacy programs around the state

Volunteers tutors — (Cont. from pg. 4)

kinds of learners and seeing them grow and learn from one another,” says Linda Davis of Oakton Community College. “She truly appreciates being part of a group of committed volunteers like herself.”

Carol continues to be amazed by the number of adults from all over the world coming to the program, gaining new knowledge, getting along so well and treating each other with respect. Though initially intimidated by their new encounters in the U.S., with Carol’s support and encouragement, her learners have embraced their new experiences.

ON THE HORIZON

- **January 17-19** – Annual Illinois Comprehensive Literacy & Reading Recovery Conference, Chicago, IL: www.nl.edu/readingrecoveryconference
- **February 20-23** – Illinois Head Start Annual Conference, East Peoria, IL: www.ilheadstart.org
- **February 21-24** – Learning Disabilities Association Annual International Conference, Atlanta, GA: www.lदानatl.org
- **March 7-9** – Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association Conference, Springfield, IL: www.iacea.net
- **March 21-24** – International TESOL Annual Convention, Chicago, IL: www.tesol.org
- **March 25-28** – Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE), Phoenix, AZ: www.coabe.org
- **April 25-28** – National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, Washington, DC: www.nctm.org
- **April 8-14** – National Library Week: www.ala.org
- **April 15-22** – National Volunteer Week: www.pointsoflight.org
- **April 21** – On The Road to Literacy Conference, Chicago, IL: www.lvillinois.orgwww.lvillinois.org

More literacy event information is available at www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/home.html (click Calendar of Literacy Events).

WWW



<https://www.thoughtco.com/esl-4133095>

This website provides a number of English as a Second Language resources for teachers looking for materials; beginners; or advanced students who want to sharpen their reading comprehension, conversation, and writing skills.

<http://www.libraryliteracy.org/staff/rg/curriculum.html>

This website contains resources for literacy volunteers and staffers, combining activities, ideas, games, materials, websites, tips, insider information and sound advice for accomplishing goals.

<http://www.goliteracy.org/tutor-tips-and-online-resources.html>

This website offers a collection of tips for tutors and online resources, including lesson plan assistance, helping students with learning disabilities, citizenship and more.

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