ON THE HORIZON

More statistical information on Illinois’ literacy effort is available at www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy.

FY15 Adult Literacy Grant applications available

The FY15 Adult Literacy Grant application is available at www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy (click Apply for an Adult Literacy Grant). Completed applications and all applicable supporting documentation must be submitted via email as PDF attachments to literacy@ilsos.net by 11:59 p.m., March 14, 2014. Grant information meetings were held January 22 and are posted at the website above. For more information, call 217-785-6921 or 800-665-5576, ext. 3.

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Fiscal year 2013 final reports submitted by programs funded through the State Library Literacy Office revealed the following statistics. Success stories from each program follow.

**Adult Volunteer Literacy**
- 19,022 adult learners served
- Average age of adult learner was 39
- 37% of adult learners were employed
- 55% of adult learners were studying English as a Second Language (ESL)
- 7,795 volunteers served adult learners
- Average age of volunteer tutors was 47

**Success Story:** Parkland College, Champaign

A man called the literacy office at the college asking, “Can you teach a 67-year-old to read?” The volunteer coordinator assured him that it was possible and made an appointment to meet him in the library lobby for the initial assessment. On the day of the appointment, the volunteer coordinator waited in the lobby and asked several men if they were her appointee. She then spotted a man sitting alone with an oxygen tank. His face and hands were disfigured by burns from a fire. He rose to meet her, he extended one misshapen hand and asked if she was the lady from Project READ. She welcomed him and walked him to the study room, noticing that his gait and breathing were also a struggle.

The volunteer coordinator explained the literacy assessment and left him to complete the test, which showed he ranked just a little above a fourth-grade reading level. He had two goals: to be able to help his granddaughter with her homework and to learn to read the Bible. He explained that his disease was called neuropathomiasis, and the polyps not only cover his body but are also in his lungs and possibly his brain, which can affect his ability to learn. One daughter and his granddaughter also are afflicted with the disease.

The volunteer coordinator knew that it might be a challenge to find the right person to be his tutor. She sent an email to the volunteer tutors explaining his situation and the extra sensitivity required. Within two hours she received a reply from a veteran tutor who also happened to be a retired doctor. The tutor was familiar with his condition and his situation captured her heart. They scheduled a get-acquainted meeting and have been meeting faithfully for tutoring ever since.

Because he works even harder than asked, the man is improving quickly. Not only is he improving his literacy skills, he also has a new friend in his tutor.

**Penny Sevens Family Literacy**
- 1,381 adult learners served
- 88% were female adults
- 75% were adult learners studying ESL
- Average age of adult learner was 51
- 52% obtained a library card
- 1,832 children were served
- 50% were male children
- Average age of children served was 6

**Success Story:** DataSails/Tolton Center, Chicago

A family with a 4-year-old son joined the Family Literacy program at the Tolton Center. While the parents spoke some English, they wanted to improve their skills by taking ESL classes.

Both parents became leaders with strong attendance and improved confidence in English usage. While they attended ESL classes their son attended child education classes. He had high academic skills, but had difficulty playing with other children. When he would become overstimulated, he had trouble calming down and his teachers worried that he would have problems in kindergarten.

While in child education class, the instructors taught the boy relaxation techniques. In parenting class, they taught the parents about what to expect of kindergarten in the American school system. After these services, the boy was beginning to work out social situations. His parents used the strategies they learned and implemented them at home.

By their example, both parents are teaching their children to love to learn. They participate in all the family literacy services at Tolton then integrate what they have learned into their home life. They cook, write, create and play with their children at home. When there is a family field trip at Tolton they include their older son as well.

This family is an ambassador for the program, urging other families to take advantage of all the resources available. Tolton’s Family Literacy program has been a life-changing experience for the entire family.

**Workplace Skills Enhancement**

- 602 employees received instruction
- 64% of employees instructed were female
- Average age of employee was 43
- 99% of employees studied ESL
- 2,850 hours of instruction were completed
- 50% of businesses had fewer than 300 employees
- 20% of businesses met or exceeded matched

**Resources available to support literacy projects**

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To return resources, the requesting literacy program must return the materials to their local library, which will make arrangements to return the materials to the State Library.

**Adult & Family Literacy Resource Collections**

Adult & Family Literacy Resource Collections are small groupings of current resource materials focused on one topic. Each collection contains up to 12 items, which are shipped in lightweight nylon bags. Resource Collections may be borrowed for up to four weeks and are great tools for staff development workshops, orienting new staff or expanding the knowledge of experienced staff.

More than 36 Resource Collections covering 16 topics are available. For a list of materials contained in each collection, visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/literacyresources.html.

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Adult New Reader Book Club Collections are a new resource available to funded projects that want to provide adult learners an opportunity to explore the joy of reading for pleasure. Each of the nine Book Club Collections contains 20 copies of a single title and a discussion leader’s guide. Most titles also have an audio CD to help new readers become more comfortable with the text. New readers who participate in a Book Club report improved fluency, understanding and confidence.

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There are 48 Story Kits comprised of 23 titles. Literacy programs may borrow the kits for up to a month. The kits are shipped in large Rubbermaid containers and are easy to prepare accordingly. For more information about the kits, visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/storykits.html.
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A man called the literacy office at the college asking, “Can you teach a 67-year-old to read?” The volunteer coordinator assured him that it was possible and made an appointment to meet him in the library lobby for the initial assessment. On the day of the appointment, the volunteer coordinator waited in the lobby and asked several men if they were her appointee. She then spotted a man sitting alone with an oxygen tank. His face and hands were disfigured by numerous scars from aoptional surgery. When he rose to meet her, he extended one misshapen hand and asked if she was the lady from Project READ. She welcomed him and walked him to the study room, noticing that his gait and breathing were also a struggle.
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Workplace Skills Enhancement
822 employees received instruction
64% of employees instructed were female
Average age of employee was 43
99% of employees studied ESL
2,858 hours of instruction were completed
50% of businesses had fewer than 300 employees
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The WYCA of Signs borrowed the Parenting Education Resource Bin.

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The Literacy Office has many resources available for you to borrow as detailed on page 3. For incarcerated adults, participating in literacy tutoring at correctional facilities can open a door to education. Some inmates even provide literacy tutoring to their fellow inmates. To participate in the program, participants must score below the ninth-grade level in reading or math or speak English below the SPLO 7 level. 13 local correctional facilities, 10 state and 1 federal facility provided literacy services.

Fiscal year 2013 reports show that 422 public libraries in Illinois participate in literacy in some way, offering sites for tutoring and recruitment and referral to literacy projects. The S24 library-tutoring sites in the state enable literacy programs to reach many learners conveniently near their homes with confidentiality and ready access to reading materials and technology. Literacy programs rely on libraries for the full array of library services, and many libraries are providing services to more than one literacy program.

More statistical information on Illinois’ literacy effort is available at www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy.

ON THE HORIZON


February 28-March 1 — II TESOL-BE 40th Annual Convention, Liston, www.itbe.org

March 5-7 — IACEA Conference, Springfield, www.iacea.net


March 16-19 — 2014 COABE National Conference, Pittsburgh, PA, coabe.org

March 26-29 — TESOL International Convention and English Language Expo, Portland, OR, www.tesol.org

April 6-12 — National Volunteer Week, www.pointsoflight.org

April 9-12 — National Council of Teachers of Mathematics’ 2014 Annual Meeting & Exposition, New Orleans, nctm.org

April 12 — On the Road to Literacy Conference, www.lvillinois.org

April 13-19 — National Library Week, www.ala.org

Nominations for Spotlight on Achievement and Service Awards are available at www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/spotlight-awards.html, along with stories of past winners like Emmitt Cole (right) of Decatur. The deadline to submit nomination forms is February 14.

The Spotlight awards recognize outstanding achievement by adult learners or families as well as outstanding contributions to literacy and the success of adult learners made by adult volunteer tutors. This year’s Spotlight Awards ceremony will be held at the Illinois State Library in Springfield on May 15. For more information, call the Literacy Office at 217-785-6921 or 1-800-665-5578, ext. 3.

The Literacy Office offered FY14 Secretary of State-funded literacy programs the opportunity to apply for scholarships to attend the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association conference (March 5-7 in Springfield). Each award is worth approximately $450 and may be used to cover registration fees, lodging for two nights at the conference hotel, and a one-year membership to both the IACEA and the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE). Scholarships were awarded to:

- Karen Avalos, Carl Sandburg College, Galesburg
- Meghan Green, Aquinas Literacy Center, Chicago
- Cecilia Hernandez, Poder Learning Center, Chicago
- Karen Parrillo, Albany Park Community Center, Chicago
- Melanie Sampson, Howard Area Community Center, Chicago

One round of scholarships will be offered in the fall for attendance to the March 2015 IACEA conference. Notification will go out to all FY15 funded literacy programs.