Literacy Connection
Literally Changing Lives

165 Tutors
282 Learners
61 adults and 85 of their children participated in the Family Literacy Program

525 Dependent children of adult learners

The Trivia Bee raised $18,495

130 Students on the waiting list
28 Administrative volunteers helped with activities
13 Months ESL learners waited for a tutor

96 Increased involvement in their children’s education
141 Improved score on standardized tests
103 Attained consumer skills
73 Met work-based student goal

60 Improved employability skills
40 Got a job or better job
10 Got a driver’s license
3 Achieved citizenship

Annual Report
A Message from the Board President

Dear Friend of the Literacy Connection,

Our fiscal year 2013-2014 found us ringing in the holiday season with a cookie exchange and a Bunco fundraising event. We partnered with the Altrusa Club of Elgin to hold a Bunco fundraiser in November. In December, Literacy Connection staff, board members, and volunteers held a cookie exchange. Many delicious cookies were shared and taken home to enjoy.

Our learners Marisol L., Marisol M., and Yurby became American citizens.

We kicked off our Letters for Literacy campaign with sponsorships from Business Matters and the Einstein Academy. We participated in the ECC Learning Community Project with several of our tutors and learners meeting with ECC students for personal interviews. We also began the process of formulating a new strategic plan.

I want to thank our donors, volunteers, staff and board members. Your support makes everything possible.

We had a great year and I look forward to another great year in 2015!

Sincerely,

Christine Awe
Board President

2014 1st Place Trivia Bee Winners: Judson University
About The Literacy Connection


Our Mission: The Literacy Connection is dedicated to helping adults in the northwest suburbs reach their literacy goals through one-on-one volunteer tutoring and small group instruction.

The Adult Volunteer Literacy Program is the agency’s core program. Trained volunteers provide one-on-one and small group tutoring to adults who are Basic Literacy or English as a Second Language (ESL) learners with the lowest literacy skill levels. Learners work with their assigned tutors to achieve measurable results, such as increased test scores, as well as personal goals like employment, citizenship, and self-confidence.

The Family Literacy Program serves parents and their children up to age 12. While the parents attend ESL classes with paid instructors, their children participate in age-appropriate educational activities. The programs are held at Channing Elementary School in Elgin and Golfview Elementary School in Carpentersville.

The agency also offers a weekly English conversation group at Gail Borden Public Library in Elgin.

“Marisol” – SUCCESS STORY – The Literacy Connection

Marisol came to The Literacy Connection in March of 2010, in hopes of improving her English to lead a better life. Although she knew it would take time and require a lot of hard work on her part and the help of others, Marisol’s ultimate goal was to pass the U.S. citizenship exam. After six months of waiting for a tutor, Marisol entered our Adult Volunteer Literacy Program and was matched with tutor, Vikki LaRocco. The two began working together on a weekly basis in August of 2010.

During the next two years, Marisol became a wife and mother. She remained dedicated to her studies and meeting weekly with her tutor. Through resources available at the Literacy Connection and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Vikki knew what needed to be done for Marisol to complete the naturalization process. The pair studied the exam questions every time they met and also worked on improving grammar and life skills so Marisol could function more efficiently in an English-speaking society.

On August 21, 2013, Marisol passed the citizenship exam at age 24. Vikki attended her naturalization ceremony and witnessed Marisol taking the Oath of Allegiance. It was a proud moment for both of them. They celebrated by sightseeing in Chicago for the day.

Over the years, Marisol reported she had met several of the goals she set for herself including gaining computer skills, having increased self-confidence, attaining a healthy lifestyle, improving her employability skills, and obtaining a library card.
# Board of Directors

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<th>OFFICE</th>
<th>Elected/Appointed</th>
<th>TERM EXPIRES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Christine Awe</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>March 2011</td>
<td>6/30/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deborah Giardina</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>June 2010</td>
<td>6/30/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Christenson</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>March 2012</td>
<td>6/30/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude “Trudy”? Zaja</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>June 2006</td>
<td>6/30/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Foster</td>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>January 2011</td>
<td>Resigned 1/31/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vikki LaRocco</td>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>September 2012</td>
<td>Resigned 1/31/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lon Meltesen</td>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>February 2011</td>
<td>Resigned 1/31/14</td>
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<td>Cheri Moore</td>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>April 2013</td>
<td>Resigned 1/31/14</td>
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<td>Marcia Munn</td>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>March 2013</td>
<td>Resigned 4/16/14</td>
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<td>Carlos Trujillo</td>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>June 2008</td>
<td>6/30/2014</td>
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<td>Susan Van Weelden</td>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>October 2012</td>
<td>Resigned 1/22/14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen L. Oswald</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
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We make every attempt to ensure accuracy in our donor lists. Please contact the office by email at info@elginliteracy.org or by phone at 847-742-6565 if we have misspelled your name. Donor lists represent donations received by June 30, 2014.
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Thank You Thank You Thank You Thank You Thank You Thank You Thank You Thank You Thank You

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City of Elgin Riverboat Grant Program
Combined Federal Campaign
EFS Foundation
Elgin Township
First Congregational United Church of Christ-Elgin
Grand Victoria Foundation
Kane County Riverboat Fund
Illinois State Library, a Division of the Office of Secretary of State
United Way of Elgin

This project was made possible by a grant awarded by the Illinois State Library, a division of the Office of Secretary of State, using funds designated for literacy.

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Training Locations
Algonquin Area Public Library, Eastgate Branch
Fox River Valley Public Library
Gail Borden Public Library

Family Literacy Partners
Channing Elementary School, Elgin
Gailview Elementary School, Carpentersville

Office Space and Support
Gail Borden Public Library
Financials

SUPPORT AND REVENUES
Individuals, businesses and organizations 3%
Foundations 5%
Government 33%
United Way 2%
In-kind (tutor hours, rent & services) 50%
Program Fees 1%
Special Events 4%
Interest/Other 1%
100%

EXPENSES
Total Adult & Family Literacy Programs 88%
Management and General 8%
Fundraising 4%
100%

2014 Annual Program Statistics

• 165 tutors volunteered 10,691 hours
• 28 administrative volunteers helped with activities
• 282 adults were tutored in the volunteer literacy program
• 61 adults and 85 of their children participated in the Family Literacy Program
• Average waiting list for programs was 130 students
• Average wait time was 13 months for ESL learners

Learner Achievements
• 141 Improved their score on standardized tests
• 103 Attained consumer skills
• 96 Increased involvement in their children’s educational activities
• 61 Met work-based student goal
• 60 Improved employability skills
• 40 Got a job or better job
• 10 Got a driver’s license
• 3 Achieved citizenship

Did you know...

A “typical” adult learner in the program in 2014 was a 43-year-old married Hispanic mother of two children. She was from Mexico, where she attended nine years of education. She lived in Elgin and was employed full time, but her family income was less than $30,000/year. She met with a tutor one-on-one to learn English and attended 34 hours of instruction. She had participated in the program for 3.25 years. She could read and write short sentences or phrases and complete personal information on simple forms. She could ask and was able to answer simple questions and follow basic instructions. Based on assessments, her oral speaking skills were at the High Beginning ESL level and her written skill levels were at the Low Beginning ESL level.