



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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White Awards \$80,000 to Joliet Community in Literacy Grants

SPRINGFIELD — Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White presented \$80,000 in literacy grants that will provide basic skills instruction to adults and families in the Joliet area.

The grants to the Joliet Public Library and Joliet Junior College are part of \$7.6 million Secretary White awarded during Literacy Month.

"Our literacy programs in Illinois help adults and families improve their reading, writing, math and English," said White. "In addition, we have built partnerships with businesses to provide skills training for prospective employees. By teaching people the basic skills they need, we are helping them function effectively as workers, parents and citizens in our communities."

White made the announcement as a part of activities highlighting September as Literacy Month. Using the theme 'Adults Can Go Back To School Too,' White wants adults to see they are the change agents not only for themselves, but for their children as well.

While all of the literacy programs help adults and families improve their reading and basic skills, each is designed to help people improve their lives in a different way.

The grant for the Joliet Junior College (JJC) is a \$45,000 grant for adult volunteer literacy. The funds will go toward recruiting, training and materials.

"Meeting the literacy needs of our district is a vital part of our mission," said J.D Ross, JJC President. "The generosity of Secretary White's office and the tireless efforts of our staff and volunteers leads to a significantly improved quality of life for the citizens we are able to reach through this program."

The Joliet Public Library received a grant of \$35,000 for family literacy. The funds will go towards staffing, materials, books, computers, and software.

"Learning how to read is hard work," said Jim Johnston, the director of the library. "This grant allows us to dedicate one-on- one assistance, create fun activities, and all of that keeps our visibility up and adds excitement to the program."

The Secretary of State funds many different types of literacy programs including adult volunteer programs, workplace skills enhancement programs, making work pay programs, family literacy programs and new chapters programs. Each program depends on local support and partnerships to help identify and students recruit volunteers and provide in-kind resources to stretch the grant funding.

"These literacy grants have proven to be a wonderful investment for the state," said White. "The partnerships we have created throughout the state have provided new opportunities for thousands of people."