



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

For Immediate Release:
May 11, 2011

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Jesse White and Illinois Press Assn. Announce Spotlight Awards For Outstanding Literacy Students and Tutors

SPRINGFIELD –Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White and the Illinois Press Association announced today the winners of the annual Spotlight on Achievement and Spotlight on Service awards recognizing outstanding literacy students and volunteer tutors in Illinois. The awards were presented during a ceremony at the Illinois State Library in Springfield.

"I am honored and privileged to congratulate these outstanding students for their hard work and determination in seeking to enhance their reading and learning skills," said Secretary White. "Many of them have overcome tremendous personal difficulties and obstacles to reach this level of achievement. Their stories are of courage and amazing persistence, and everyone should be inspired by their success."

"I am also extremely proud to recognize our outstanding volunteer tutors for their generosity and encouragement in helping literacy students achieve their utmost potential. I firmly believe each of us should give something back to our neighbors and our communities, and these heroes who help improve the lives of their literacy students are a wonderful example of the positive impact that comes from volunteerism."

"The Illinois Press Association and Foundation are again honored to join Secretary White in celebrating the achievements of this year's Spotlight award honorees," said Dennis M. DeRossett, Executive Director of the Illinois Press Association. "These students have made a life-changing decision to boost their life's potential through improved learning skills. This could not be accomplished without dedicated tutors to guide them along the path of learning. Illinois newspapers are proud to be a part of this commitment to help people overcome the crippling effects of illiteracy."

Eleven adult students were honored for outstanding achievement in developing and improving their literacy skills:

- Willie Davis, who attends classes at De La Salle Tolton, Chicago
- Shellie Higley, Sauk Valley Community College, Dixon
- Mu Lei, Black Hawk College, Moline
- Mylan Nguyen, Township High School District 214 Community Education, Arlington Heights
- Hugo Romero, Literacy Volunteers DuPage, Naperville
- Eric Shenarult, Prairie State College, Chicago Heights
- Carla Terry, YWCA Adult Literacy, Pekin
- Candace Turnipseed, De La Salle Tolton, Chicago
- Lucia Virrueta, Instituto del Progreso Latino, Chicago
- Edward Whitt, Illinois Eastern Community Colleges, Fairfield
- Charles Williams, The Literacy Council, Rockford

Each of the winners received a \$200 check from the Illinois Press Association Foundation and a plaque and personalized Illinois Blue Book from Secretary White.

Ten outstanding tutors were honored for their contributions in helping literacy students reach their goals:

- Margaret “Marge” Cribben, who is a tutor at De La Salle/Tolton Center, Chicago
- Eunice Golden, Illinois Eastern Community Colleges, Fairfield
- Julie Hummert, Kaskaskia College, Centralia
- Janet King, The Literacy Council, Rockford
- Joe Levy, Anixter Center, Chicago
- Michael Murcia, Instituto del Progreso Latino, Chicago
- Reta Strecker, Congregation of St. Joseph School on Wheels, LaGrange Park
- Woody Turner, District 214 Community Education, Arlington Heights
- Dan Weakley, Literacy Volunteers of America Project U.P.W.A.R.D., Peoria
- Janet Wigodner, Waukegan Public Library, Waukegan

The ten winning tutors received a plaque and personalized Illinois Blue Book from Secretary White, and \$200 is donated by the Illinois Press Association Foundation to the literacy program where they serve as volunteer tutors.

Students and tutors are nominated by the local providers who receive literacy grant funding from the Secretary of State/Illinois State Library Literacy Office. Last year adult literacy programs that received grant funding provided educational services to 21,838 adult students. 8,540 volunteer tutors statewide provided nearly 476, 000 hours of time to help students develop and enhance their reading, writing, math and language skills. Persons interested in becoming volunteer tutors are urged to contact the Illinois Adult Learning Hotline at 1-800-321-9511.

[\(Profiles of the award-winning students and tutors\)](#)

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