

LITERACY

WINTER
2014

ILLINOIS

Jesse White
Secretary of State
& State Librarian

I am excited to share this issue of *Illinois Literacy* because it demonstrates the tremendous work we are accomplishing around the state. You will see the impact that our Adult Literacy programs are having on individuals, families and the workplace. The numbers we are serving and the changes participants are experiencing are extraordinary. We can be proud of the work we accomplished in 2013 and look forward to the progress that will be made in 2014.



The Literacy Office has awarded scholarships for literacy professionals to attend the upcoming Illinois Adult & Continuing Educators Association's annual conference in March. Please take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to meet with your peers from around the state and equip yourselves to address the ever-changing needs of your learners.

The Literacy Office has many resources available for you to borrow as detailed on page 3. I encourage you to take advantage of these free resources in your continuing efforts in improving the lives of the adults you serve. Best wishes for continued success in 2014.

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Spotlight Awards nomination forms available

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 1-800-665-5576, ext. 3.



Secretary of State Jesse White joined Megan Towner (left) and Julie Pangrac of Richland Community College in Decatur in congratulating Emmitt Cole on his 2013 Spotlight on Achievement Award last spring.

IACEA conference scholarships awarded

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

Another 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.

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

- 19,932 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 appointment. She then spotted a man sitting alone with an oxygen tank. His face and hands were disfigured by hundreds of fleshy growths. 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.

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 schoolwork and to learn to read the Bible. He explained that his disease was called neurofibromatosis, 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 Severns Family Literacy

- 1,361 adult learners served
- 88% were female adults
- 70% were adult learners studying ESL
- Average age of adult learner was 31
- 52% obtained a library card
- 1,832 children were served
- 50% were female children
- Average age of children served was 6

Success Story: DeLaSalle/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 over stimulated, 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
- 2,856 hours of instruction were completed
- 50% of businesses had fewer than 300 employees
- 70% of businesses met or exceeded proposed match

(continued on page 4)

Resources available to support literacy projects



The YWCA of Elgin borrowed the Parenting Education Resource Bin #24. Using resources in the bin, program participants learned the importance of parents reading to their children.



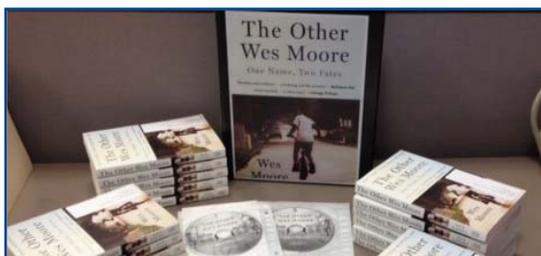
Universidad Popular, Chicago, adult learners discuss *The House on Mango Street* Book Club Collection.



A Sick Day For Amos McGee Story Kit.



Howard Area Community Center's Penny Severns Family Literacy program in Chicago enjoys the *Amanda and the Mysterious Carpet* Story Kit during PACT time.



The Other Wes Moore Adult New Reader Book Club Collection.

The State Library Literacy Office offers a variety of resources to support literacy projects. All resources are available to borrow for free, with shipping provided free through the Illinois Library Delivery System.

To borrow any of the following resources, please contact your local library to secure permission to have the materials shipped to the library. Then email Jo Anne Hughes with your name, agency, name of the library and library contact person, and name/number of the resource requested along with the date you would like it. Once resources are requested, programs can expect arrival at their local library in about a week.

To return resources, the requesting literacy program must return the materials to their local library, which will make arrangements to return the resources 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/litresourcebins.html.

Adult New Reader Book Club Collections

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.

Literacy programs may borrow a Book Club Collection for the period of time needed to complete the book. The paperback collections are shipped in lightweight nylon bags. For a description of the books, reading level and themes, visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/book_clubs.html.

Story Kits

Story Kits are packaged, participatory program activities for parents and children to do together. The kits are based on children's literature and focused on reading strategies. Each Story Kit provides multiple copies of one children's book and most of the materials to implement a facilitated, literature-based activity for family groups. Story Kits also contain a facilitator's guide that describes how to plan for and implement the family activity.

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 heavy so please prepare accordingly. For more information about the kits, visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/storykits.html.

FY13 Literacy Program statistics (continued from page 2)

- 59% of businesses fully paid their employees to attend classes
- 64% of businesses were manufacturers

Success Story: *InterContinental Chicago O'Hare, Rosemont; Educational Partner: The Center – Resources for Teaching and Learning, Arlington Heights*

A room attendant who has been with the hotel since it opened five years ago has greatly improved her language skills by participating in ESL classes offered at the hotel. With increased confidence in speaking English, she now can better understand guest requests. She has shown that she is a valued employee by taking on extra rooms to clean or by helping a new room attendant learn the job.

Employees participating in the ESL class also learned how to use Facebook so they can communicate with their families in their home countries.

Correctional Facilities

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 SPL 7 level.

- 13 local correctional facilities, 10 state and 1 federal facility provided literacy services

- 1,572 incarcerated adults qualified and became students
- 240 inmates whose skills exceeded high school level became peer tutors
- 102 people from local communities tutored in correctional facilities
- 21 facilities received instructional materials and 11 received support services from Secretary of State-funded literacy programs
- Tutors provided adult basic education instruction to 24 correctional facilities and ESL instruction to 8 correctional facilities

Adult Literacy, Public Library Partnerships

Libraries in Illinois provide essential support for local literacy programs. 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 524 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.

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.

START THE NEW YEAR OUT RIGHT!

Volunteer to be a literacy tutor.

You can make a difference in someone's life.

Call the Illinois Adult Learning Hotline at 800-321-9511 to find a literacy program in your area.

Illinois Literacy is a publication of the Secretary of State/Illinois State Library Literacy Office.
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ON THE HORIZON

February 17-19 — National Conference on Family Literacy, Washington, D.C., familieslearning.org/conference.php

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

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

March 13-15 — "Building Bridges to Literacy" 46th Annual Illinois Reading Council Conference, Springfield, www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org

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