

**For Immediate Release:**

July 19, 2021

**Jesse White Announces Spotlight Awards For Outstanding Literacy Students and Tutors**

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White announced the winners of the 2021 Spotlight on Literacy Awards, which recognize participants in Illinois literacy programs. Ten students received the Spotlight on Achievement Award and 10 volunteer tutors received the Spotlight on Service Award during a virtual ceremony that was held due to restrictions involving the pandemic.

“I am honored to congratulate these outstanding students for their hard work and determination to attain lifelong reading and learning skills,” said White. “Many of them have had to overcome great difficulties and personal obstacles to reach this level of achievement. I am also proud to recognize our outstanding volunteer tutors for their generosity and encouragement in helping literacy students achieve their highest potential.”

In FY2021, the Secretary of State and State Librarian awarded funding to 103 programs that supported adult, family and workplace literacy efforts statewide. The programs enabled 12,124 total students to be served including 930 children. 4,856 volunteers served as adult literacy tutors.

Below is a list of award winners:

2021 Spotlight on Achievement

- **Karelys Alfaro**, Literacy DuPage in **Glen Ellyn**
- **Betty Davis**, Baby TALK in **Decatur**
- **Vicki Ferguson**, Literacy Chicago in **Chicago**
- **Belinda Guillen-Rodriguez**, Parkland College in **Champaign**
- **Maria Herrera**, De La Salle Institute/ Tolton Center in **Chicago**
- **Hazar Makkawi**, Corazon a Corazon in **Blue Island**
- **Goudile Mukamunzi**, Howard Area Community Center in **Chicago**
- **Charles Safari**, Howard Area Community Center in **Chicago**
- **Shamim Shakir**, Chinese Mutual Aid Association in **Chicago**
- **Jieling Wemple**, Chinese Mutual Aid Association in **Chicago**

2021 Spotlight on Service

- **Lee Beneze**, Lewis & Clark Community College in **Godfrey**
- **Sanjee Choudhuri**, Literacy Chicago in **Chicago**
- **Lilly Chow**, Chinese Mutual Aid Association in **Chicago**
- **Wealtha Helland**, The Literacy Council in **Rockford**
- **Pete Howlett**, Howard Area Community Center in **Chicago**
- **Penny Lopez**, Parkland College in **Champaign**
- **Aviva Rubin**, Oakton Community College in **Skokie**
- **Dora Smith**, Prairie State Community College in **Chicago Heights**
- **Marlea Smith**, Literacy DuPage in **Glen Ellyn**
- **Ann Vogel**, Danville Area Community College in **Danville**

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