

LITERACY

WINTER
2017

ILLINOIS

Jesse White
Secretary of State
& State Librarian

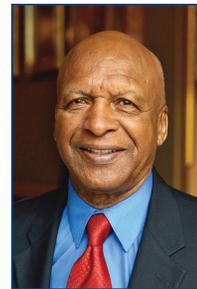
In this issue of Illinois Literacy, I am pleased to announce the funding of literacy projects throughout the state that will assist individuals with reading, writing, comprehension, math or learning the English language. I encourage you to review the list of funded projects via the Illinois State Library's website under literacy. Identify your local literacy program and make a commitment to support that program in some way in the upcoming year.

I am proud to recognize the story of a volunteer who admirably served our country in the military and now devotes her time helping individuals improve themselves through learning. The success of my office's literacy program relies on these kind and caring individuals and we owe them our deepest gratitude for the life-changing time they contribute to those who need their help. It is exciting to be part of a program that is making such a difference in the lives of Illinois residents.

My sincere thanks and appreciation to all the volunteers who make this program a success.

Jesse White

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Secretary of State & State Librarian



Secretary White awards over \$2 million to literacy projects

Secretary of State Jesse White recently awarded over \$2 million to 49 literacy projects in Illinois. These projects have 116 service locations in Cook County, including the city of Chicago, and 465 service locations throughout the rest of the state. More than 7,000 individuals are to be served in 35 Illinois counties. The descriptions of those awards are as follows:

Adult Volunteer Literacy – \$1,431,352 awarded to 29 projects to provide training for volunteers who tutor adults over age 17 who read, write, compute or comprehend below the ninth-grade level or score below SPL 7 for speakers of other languages.

Penny Severns Family Literacy – \$567,000 awarded to 15 projects that provide parents and children – both individually and together – instructional services to enhance

their basic reading, math, writing or language skills. Grants are awarded to partnerships that include an adult literacy provider, a public library and a child-at-risk organization.

Workplace Skills Enhancement – \$51,648 awarded to four busi-

nesses that offer employees on-site instructional services to enhance their basic reading, math, writing or language skills, maintain their employment and increase their eligibility for promotion. Grants are matched by the businesses at least one-to-one.



An adult learner receives help from her tutor at the Fishes and Loaves Literacy program in Springfield.

Literacy Foundation

The Illinois Literacy Foundation has worked to support literacy programs throughout the state since 1999. The foundation is committed to ensuring that every Illinoian has the reading skills to achieve the individual's utmost potential. The current strategy is focused on the development of reading readiness for preschool children. Recent efforts include a revamped website, and a Facebook page. Upcoming events include a luncheon to coincide with the American Library Association Convention in June 2017. Please "Like" the foundation's page on Facebook and forward posts to spread the word about the message of the organization.

Volunteer Tutor Spotlight

East Los Angeles, California, in the early 1990s was not necessarily the best environment for an immigrant family to settle and establish roots in America, but that is where Rosa Solanos and her family began their story in this country. Like many immigrant families, the Solanos' only remained in California for a few years before moving to other locations throughout the country to find work. Eventually the family settled in Chicago. The many moves throughout her childhood were hard on Rosa. She continually left behind friends and enrolled in new schools. Despite the changes in her day-to-day life, one constant remained: Rosa's love of school.

Growing up, Rosa dreamed of attending college and earning a well-paying job in order to help support her family. Rosa's parents emigrated to the U.S. from Mexico and relied on factory work to make enough money to survive and support their family. By the time she reached her senior year in high school, Rosa realized that college was unaffordable for her at this time. After much consideration, Rosa enlisted in the U. S. Army Reserves at the age of 17 to take advantage of the G.I. Bill to help pay for college. Her military career spanned 14 years in the Reserves, including two one-year active duty tours in Iraq.

During that time, Rosa attended the University of Illinois-Chicago, majoring in finance. She was involved in a sorority, a business student organization and the Veteran Student Association. Rosa graduated with a bachelor's degree and found that job prospects for new graduates were very limited. She always enjoyed creating new relationships and felt that being engaged in the community was important, so she decided to volunteer at an organization in her neighborhood while looking for employment.

In March 2013, Rosa began volunteering at Universidad Popular (UP), a community based organization located in the Little Village

neighborhood of Chicago. Soon, she started serving as a tutor for adult learners who were learning English. A few months later, she gained employment at a company located in Chicago's West Loop, but continued her work as a volunteer tutor. Rosa still volunteers three nights a week even after putting in a full day of work. "These adult learners reminded me so much of my parents and the struggles they went through as English language learners," says Rosa. "If I stopped tutoring it would have been like walking away from my own parents."



Rosa Solanos— volunteer tutor at Universidad Popular.

The staff at UP says that Rosa is always upbeat and eager to assist whoever needs help. Her joy is contagious and her enthusiasm helps relieve the stress and anxiety learners may have from their daily lives. She is so popular that the adult literacy facilitators compete to have Rosa in their learning circles or groups. "The best way we can describe her commitment to UP and the adult learners is simply an act of love for humanity in the form of offering her services to needy fellow human beings," says UP's adult education coordinator, Cesar Lara. "The reality is that we don't think of Rosa as a mere volunteer, she is a colleague, friend and most definitely a mentor."

Electronic literacy resource list now available

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The State Library's Literacy Office has compiled a resource list for adult literacy practitioners who are responsible for developing, planning and implementing literacy services for adult learners. It also includes family literacy programs that collaborate with businesses to educate their employees. The list is categorized by theme and can be accessed through the following link at: http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/pdfs/literacy_resource_list.pdf.

The following resources are examples of selections featured on the list:

Adult Learners and Technology: How to Deliver Effective Instruction and Overcome Barriers to Learning – <http://www.umsl.edu/~wilmarthp/modla-links-2011/Adult-Learners-And-Technology.pdf>

This paper outlines the factors that cause "technophobia" or computer anxiety in adult learners. It suggests several methods of coping with anxiety so that it does not cripple the adult learner. By preparing them to utilize the technology involved in a non-threatening context,

learners can achieve success that is critical to foster and promote positive attitudes in adults toward technology and learning.

The Effect of Family Literacy Interventions on Children's Acquisition of Reading – https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/lit_interventions.pdf

This report describes strategies proven to work by the most rigorous scientific research available on the teaching of reading. The goal was to review the scientific literature on parent involvement in the acquisition of literacy from kindergarten to third grade.

Doing Business Together: Adult Education and Business Partnering to Build a Qualified Workforce – <http://www.caalusa.org/Doing.pdf>

This report draws on the experience of 20 states with extensive experience in workforce and workplace education programming. A key element is their successful collaborations with local and state businesses and chambers of commerce.

FY16 Illinois Literacy program statistics

Fiscal year 2016 final reports submitted by programs funded through the State Library Literacy Office revealed the following statistics:

Adult Volunteer Literacy

- 6,178 – Adult learners served
- 40 – Average age of adult learner
- 68 percent – Female adults
- 60 percent – Adult learners employed
- 59 percent – Adult learners studying English as a Second Language (ESL)
- 3,216 – Volunteers serving adult learners
- 55 – Average age of volunteer tutor

Penny Severns Family Literacy

- 630 – Adult learners served
- 93 percent – Female adults
- 75 percent – Adult learners studying ESL
- 30 – Average age of adult learner
- 45 percent – Obtained a library card
- 882 – Children served
- 4.5 – Average age of child

Workplace Skills Enhancement

- 176 – Employees assessed and/or instructed

- 46.5 percent – Female
- 39 – Average age of employee
- 84.6 percent – Employees studied ESL

Correctional Facilities

For incarcerated adults, participating in literacy tutoring at correctional facilities may open a door to education. To participate in the program, participants must score below the ninth-grade reading or math level or speak limited English.

- 21 local correctional facilities, one state facility and one federal facility provided literacy services
- 110 incarcerated adults qualified and became students
- 37 tutors from local communities tutored in correctional facilities

Libraries as Partners

- 1,041 adult learners obtained a library card
- 220 public libraries offer the library facility as a tutoring site
- 205 public libraries refer prospective students and volunteer tutors to literacy programs
- 122 public libraries house a high-interest/low-vocabulary reading collection
- 48 public libraries provided overhead for literacy programs that included office space, telephone and printing for advertising

ON THE HORIZON

February 16-19 – Learning Disabilities Association Annual International Conference, Marriott Waterfront Hotel, Baltimore, MD, www.ldanatl.org

February 24-25 – Illinois TESOL Convention, Chicago Marriott Naperville, Naperville, www.itbe.org

March 8-10 – Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association Conference, Chicago Marriott Naperville, Naperville, www.iacea.net

March 21-24 – TESOL Annual Convention, Washington State Convention Center, Seattle, WA www.tesol.org/

April 1-2 – PTA State Convention, Hilton Lisle/Naperville, Lisle, IL <http://www.illinoispta.org/convention.html>

April 2-5 – Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE), Disney's Coronado Springs Resort, Kissimmee, FL, www.coabe.org/

April 5-8 – National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, San Antonio, TX, www.nctm.org

April 9-15 – National Library Week, www.ala.org

April 23-29 – National Volunteer Week, www.pointsoflight.org

May 1-7 – Children's Book Week, www.bookweekonline.com

More literacy event information is available at www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/home.html (click Calendar of Literacy Events).



IACEA 37th Annual Statewide Conference

March 8 - 10, 2017
Naperville, IL
Chicago Marriott Naperville



For more information on the upcoming Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association conference, visit the association's website at www.iacea.net.

Illinois Literacy is a publication of the Secretary of State, Illinois State Library Literacy Office.

Jesse White, Secretary of State and State Librarian
Greg McCormick, Acting Deputy Director, Illinois State Library

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