



One in ten Frederick County adults is functionally illiterate.
Together we can end illiteracy.

Annual Report • November 2015

LITERACY COUNCIL FREDERICK COUNTY, MD

EMPOWERING ADULTS THROUGH ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

Workplace Literacy Programs Launched



Phil Bowers, President of Fountain Rock Management Corp., is seen with Literacy Council students, chef Mario, Catherine Cox, and Denise Dertzbaugh.

Two local businesses partnered with the Literacy Council this year to help their employees to improve their literacy skills. Volunteer tutors Denise Dertzbaugh and Martin Cole were instrumental in the success of these new programs, working closely with the businesses to identify vocabulary and daily conversation skills and work with the employees so they can apply their learning in their jobs. Denise developed and led a 10-week class at Brewer's Alley for kitchen workers from five downtown restaurants. Plans are now underway to continue the classes for a new group of employees.

Martin tutors employees from the Magic Foot Spa several days a week for 2-2 ½ hours helping with conversation scenarios and vocabulary. According to business owner Weiyi (Wendy) Luo, learning to communicate with her customers is essential to the success of her business, which provides deep tissue massages, reflexology and acupressure sessions to relax and relieve pain. Denise is a retired teacher and Martin a retired U.S. Postal Service Employee.

Caroline Gaver Receives Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award



Caroline Gaver is seen receiving the Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award from Maryland First Lady Yumi Hogan. Photo: Governor's Office Photo Gallery

The Literacy Council of Frederick County's long-time president Caroline Gaver received the Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award in Annapolis on October 26 presented by Mrs. Yumi Hogan, Maryland's First Lady. Of the 15



Martin Cole is seen with several students that he tutors at Magic Foot Massage. Photo: Bill Green, Frederick News-Post

awards presented, Caroline received the only Lifetime Achievement award, which recognizes an individual who has exhibited a lifelong commitment to volunteerism and community service. Nominees must have made a substantial and long-term sustained impact in the community as a result of their service effort.

Caroline has contributed over 28,300 hours of service in various roles and has trained about 2,500 volunteer tutors for Frederick Co. and 500 in surrounding counties. These tutors have helped over 8,000 adults. Currently, the Council supports over 100 tutors all trained in part by Caroline. Last year they contributed over 14,000 hours and provided free, one-on-one basic literacy tutoring and life skills to over 200 adults. She has served in every volunteer position available, including terms as board president or vice president exceeding 20 years. She was also instrumental in helping to form Literacy Councils in Washington, Carroll and Garrett Counties.

"Caroline has been the linchpin of the Literacy Council. Only in the last four years has the Council employed staff. While her leadership has inspired others, most remarkable is her devotion to maintaining the organization. She has raised funds, sought board members, appeared before organizations to promote the work of the Council and attended to the mundane but necessary details that are essential to the existence and success of an organization. The vitality and effectiveness of the Literacy Council today are primarily due to Caroline's vision and dedication to the cause of literacy."

John Tisdale, Board Member

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Basic Literacy
English as a Second Language
Workplace Literacy • Citizenship
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Math & Computer-based Literacy
Learning Disabilities Services
Conversation Classes



President's Message

Beth Lowe
President of the Board of Directors

Dear Literacy Enthusiasts –

I'm thrilled to be the newly elected President of the Literacy Council Board of Directors. I joined the Board in 2011, at a time when I was seeking an opportunity to volunteer and to make a positive contribution to the Frederick community that I love.

In addition to my volunteer position with the Literacy Council, I work as an analyst in Enterprise Change Management at State Farm, and I also volunteer with the Association of Change Management Professionals. Outside of work and volunteering, I love to travel, and of course I love to read.

One of my earliest memories was having my mom read a book to me and asking her, over and over, when I was going to learn to read myself! Since then, reading has been a central part of my life, and the opportunity to help others read is truly a gift.

All of the success stories from our students are compelling, but I think you just need to hear one or two stories of people getting better jobs or becoming U.S. citizens to understand the impact of this work. I hope to carry on the mission of the Literacy Council in a way that will make those who have come before me proud. The Literacy Council has been around for 52 years, and the need for our services has never been greater. If you'd like more information about volunteering as a tutor, other volunteering opportunities, or if you know someone who might benefit from our services, please get in touch!

bethlowe@frederickliteracy.org



Executive Director's Message

Laurie D. Fisher
Executive Director

Literacy Council volunteer tutors transform lives every day in Frederick County. Throughout my first year on the job I kept hearing this word “transform.” Now I have seen this in action and witnessed the impact – in the stories of parents, grandparents, families and children whose lives have been changed for the better. ProLiteracy, our national affiliate organization, recently shared the following quote: “The single greatest indicator of a child’s future success is the literacy level of the parents.” Giving the gift of literacy has a multiplier effect, empowering our community, contributing to its wellbeing and continued economic growth one person at a time.

There are so many stories of hope, yet it is clear this work is far from complete. I recently heard from a grandmother who expressed gratitude for the efforts of a newly-trained tutor to help her grandson. The same day a single mother visited our office in tears asking for a tutor so she could help her eight-year old daughter progress in school. We learn of employees who are working multiple jobs with no hope of earning a living wage without a high school diploma, but where do they begin if they can't read. We are inspired by employers who are eager to support workplace literacy programs to help their employees succeed.

Consider giving the gift of a tutor this coming year by volunteering or making a financial contribution so that we can reach more families with the power of literacy. Investing in adult literacy is also about investing in Frederick County's future. Thank you.

lauriefisher@frederickliteracy.org



Students Lead The Way in New Class

Every first and third Tuesday the Literacy Council hosts a special class that helps to meet the challenges of a multinational group of adults. Students and tutors join together on the “off” Tuesdays to plan the classes together. The first half of the class features a presentation by the tutor or students to learn about their country of origin as well as the story of their first year in the United States. The tutors present on civics topics and holidays, including most recently, Halloween. Students then break into groups and discuss prepared questions, and participate in short grammar lessons and instruction on idioms.

The inspiration for this class came from students Seham Juakiem and Yun Wang. Class faculty includes volunteer tutors Maria Kummerfeldt, Silvia Muñoz-Salomon and Catherine Coundjeris.

External activities in the community have also been incorporated into the class schedule -- including collaborating with FCC’s Spanish class taught by Professor Laura Cordova and attending their National Heritage Festival. The class gave presentations in English on Venezuela, Peru, and Brazil during the visit to FCC. Literacy Council students attended FCC’s celebration of the Day of the Dead to share information about Halloween traditions in English and tell some ghost stories and read poetry to Professor Cordova’s class.

Field trips have also been organized to the Frederick Memorial Hospital for tours led by tutor and FMH employee Nan Principe-Crockett, the Rose Hill Manor Museum and the Francis Scott Key Memorial as an extension of a civics lesson. A Thanksgiving celebration is planned with presentations about Thanksgiving’s history and conversations about celebrations of other cultures.

Ghanaian Man Learns to Read and Write to Help His Kids

As a child and younger man in Ghana, Ya Ya Musah, complied with African culture and honored his father’s wishes. He worked hard in the fields of his family’s plantain and cattle farm during the hot and dry, as well as chilly rainy seasons year after year and did not go to school.

Today, at the age of 36 in Frederick, thousands of miles from home, he is playing catch-up and learning to read and write thanks to the help of Literacy Council volunteer tutor Jeff Trewthitt. He has a young son and new-born daughter and he wants to be able to help them do their homework when they start school. He also wants to be able to read street signs better when he is driving to make his job easier. And maybe, once he has mastered reading and writing, he can explore more educational opportunities.

It’s not an easy task learning to read and write when you have to get up at 4:30 a.m. each morning for a job delivering packages and envelopes to offices all over Frederick and Hagerstown. Ya Ya must drive round-trip to a warehouse in Springfield, Virginia, to pick up his packages and often does not end his day until 4:30 p.m.

Some days, he has to cancel his tutoring session when he can’t be home until 6 or 6:30. On occasion, when he is being tutored, he dozes off briefly, a result of the stress and fatigue of his demanding job. But still he persists and meets with a tutor an hour to 75 minutes a day three days a week. He said he has no choice. “It’s your life at stake,” Ya Ya said. “If you can’t read or write, you can’t do anything. I have two kids and I have to learn

to read and write so I can direct them in the right way. I want to be able to help them with their homework.”

In the time he has been working with Jeff, he has gone from learning the alphabet, to learning words that describe pictures, to reading at about a second grade level. Though he still has a long way to go, he is making steady progress and no one could be happier than his wife Patience.

Now that he has completed two levels in the Laubach Way to Reading curriculum series used by the Literacy Council for beginning readers, Ya Ya is able to read some of the names and words on his delivery manifest at work and words on street signs. He intends to be ready to help his toddler son Elijah and new-born daughter Laila when they learn to read in several years.

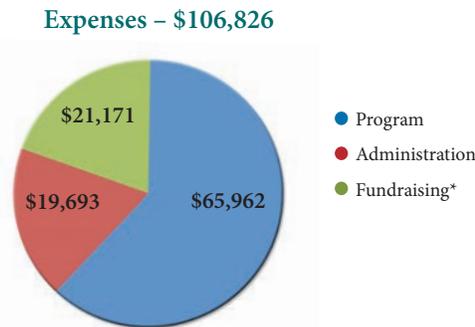
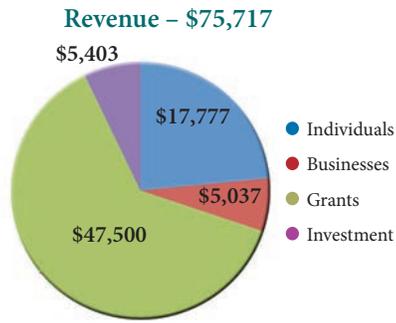
SAVE THE DATE: Literacy Council’s Scrabble® MANIA for Literacy

Support us by participating in an exciting afternoon of Scrabble® on Sunday, March 6, 2016, 2-5 p.m., Delaplaine Arts Center! Interested players and sponsors contact Diana Halleman, 301-600-2066.

New Giving Societies Launched

Businesses, foundations and individuals supporting Literacy Council programs will be recognized as philanthropic leaders through the new Giving Societies initiative for their commitment to empowering adults through English language proficiency. Contact Laurie Fisher, Executive Director at lauriefisher@frederickliteracy.org.

2014-2015 Finances



Whom did we serve?

Basic Literacy Students: 19

ESL Students: 198

Volunteer and Student Growth

	2010	2015	% Growth
Volunteers	98	120	22%
Students	116	217	87%

All Literacy Council direct services are provided by volunteers. Last year our 120 volunteers contributed over 14,000 hours of their time, equaling approximately 350 40-hour work weeks, equating to a monetary value of \$323,000 (based on a standardized hourly rate of \$23.07).

*Note: The Board of Directors approved this deficit budget for the Literacy Council's first year with a part-time paid Executive Director. One of the goals in hiring an Executive Director is to increase the Council's fundraising and development programs. The Council is using cash available for operations resulting from prior year surpluses to cover the deficit spending. *Fundraising expenses include \$14,100 from a one-time grant for the development of a fundraising plan.*

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