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Literacy Services of Wisconsin and Milwaukee Achiever Literacy Services Merge to Strengthen Adult Education and Workforce Development Services

(May 11, 2017) – Milwaukee, Wis. – The largest community-based organizations providing adult education programs in Southeastern Wisconsin – Literacy Services of Wisconsin (LSW) and Milwaukee Achiever Literacy Services (MALS) – will combine operations to expand their reach to students and increase job readiness for those in need. Both organizations’ boards are anticipating final approval by July 1, 2017.

“After more than six months of financial analysis, strategic planning with board members and other business leaders, and investigation with staff and clients, we are excited to announce this partnership that we’re confident will greatly enhance our already successful, decades-long efforts,” said Ginger Duiven, LSW executive director. Duiven will become executive director of the merged organization, which will retain the name Literacy Services of Wisconsin, Inc.

Duiven noted that the merger positions LSW to attract increased philanthropic and corporate support. Current trends show higher business and philanthropic support for organizations that combine resources to maximize their impact.

“LSW and MALS are two of the strongest local organizations providing adult basic education, including GED and job readiness training. We will become far more cost-effective with our resources combined, allowing us to use our unique expertise to add value to our services,” Duiven said. “The result will be more powerful programs, providing life-enhancing and job-supporting skills that contribute to Milwaukee’s social and economic health.”

Holly McCoy, MALS programs director and interim executive director, said the organization welcomes the change, especially given Milwaukee’s high rates of low-wage employment and unemployment among undereducated adults.

(More)

Merger/Add One

“Perhaps the biggest advantage in bringing our complementary expertise together is to improve program impact and strengthen our business model by providing more locations for adult learners. LSW has one downtown location, while MALS will continue to operate from its south side headquarters and onsite programs at several facilities,” she said.

The organizations served about 1,200 people before the merger, and that number should remain constant in the first year of combined operations and grow in subsequent years. For more information, including a fact sheet about the merger, see www.LiteracyServices.org.

About Literacy Services of Wisconsin

The mission of Literacy Services of Wisconsin is to educate, motivate and inspire engaged adults to achieve greater independence and transform their lives. Incorporated in 1965, the primary aim is to help adults learn to read. Over the years LSW has added programming designed to provide a continuum of education services to better meet the adult learning community’s needs. These services include English language learning, GED/high school equivalency diploma preparation, financial literacy, computer literacy, and workforce readiness skills development. For more information, see www.literacyservices.org.

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