



It's Report Card Time!

By: Ginger Duiven, Executive Director

Since I last wrote you all in December we have finished up another year here at Literacy Services. The end of the fiscal year means it's report card time. We tally up all our performance measures, go through our staff performance evaluations, report our results to our community, and set goals for the New Year. Today I will finish up the last staff performance evaluation for 2016. The board of directors completed my evaluation last month. I truly value the time and energy performance reviews take. The feedback helps us all grow and develop. The goal setting part of the process helps us all identify our individual focus areas and set priorities. One thing came through loud and clear during this year's meetings: we have a great team of people who are stretching themselves to grow and deliver outstanding performance in service to our students, volunteers, and our mission.

2016 REPORT CARD:

Enrolled Students	442
English Language Learner (ELL) enrollment grew by 11%	
GED Tests Pass Rate	90%
with 37 tests passed and 6 GED completions in 2016	
Active Volunteer Tutors	358
96 new tutors joined our team in 2016	
Active Non-tutor Volunteers	135
a 100% increase over 2015	
Volunteer Hours	29,442
up by 1442 hours over 2015	
Market Value of all Volunteer Hours:	
.....	\$788,233

Numbers can tell only part of the story. We had several notable accomplishments

see **Report Card** continued on **page 4**



Leveraging Our Greatest Asset

By: Kelly Fox, Director of Adult Basic Education

For more than 50 years, Literacy Services has effectively engaged thousands of volunteers as tutors to deliver our high quality educational programming. Our tutors generously share their time and talents to help our students achieve their educational goals and transform their lives. We could not fulfill our mission without their hard work and dedication. Over the years, we have also engaged volunteers in our annual book sales and other events, and as members of our board of directors. For some time, these were generally the only volunteer opportunities available here.

Each year, however, we meet people from our community who care about our mission and want to contribute, but cannot fit in the commitment of a regular, weekly tutoring schedule or don't find events to fit their skills or interests. Under Executive Director Ginger Duiven's leadership, we started to review our volunteer opportunities to determine if there might be other ways in which interested people could help us serve our mission. Through this analysis, we realized that our volunteer opportunities had depth but lacked breadth. Although we involve hundreds of volunteers each year, the types of volunteer roles were few. We realized that this created limitations to expanding our capacity to meet our community's need for our services.

In the fall of 2015, Ginger learned about a training and certification process offered by the Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee that could help us with our volunteer program



goals, and she signed us up to participate. Members of our staff attended several intensive training sessions for the Service Enterprise Initiative to learn about best practices and strategies in volunteer recruitment, development, and management. Through this program, we have learned how expanding our volunteer opportunities beyond tutoring could help us maximize our capacity and improve the quality and reach of our services.

The Service Enterprise Initiative profoundly changed the way we envision volunteer roles and engagement at Literacy Services. Employing a thoughtful plan of volunteer outreach, engagement, relationship building, mentoring, and ongoing training, we would be truly able to partner with our volunteer community to move our mission forward. To that end, our staff created a detailed action plan and began to develop systems to improve our volunteer engagement in these ways. As a result of that work and the subsequent progress we have made in implementing our plan, we have earned Service Enterprise Certification.

see **Service Enterprise** continued on **page 7**

The Sylla·bus

Literacy Services of Wisconsin Newsletter

The Syllabus is the quarterly newsletter of
Literacy Services of Wisconsin,
a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

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Kara Coates, Bookkeeper
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Chad Knezel, Director of Development
Dustin Slane, Director of Marketing & IT

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GED® Preparation

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Founded in 1965, Literacy Services serves adult learners with quality education programs - Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Education Development (GED) test preparation, English Language Learning (ELL) - and integrated and personalized Functional Literacy instruction.

Our mission is to educate, motivate and inspire engaged adults to achieve greater independence and transform their lives. We are grateful for the broad support of our community, including over 400 volunteers and financial support from 883 individuals; 186 foundations, corporations and organizations; The United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County; and funds administered by Wisconsin Technical College System Adult Education and Family Literacy.

555 N. Plankinton Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53203-2901
(414) 344-5878

www.literacyservices.org
info@literacyservices.org



A Volunteer's Learning Experience

By: Mia Kuether, Volunteer Tutor

For nearly two years, I have had the pleasure of working with a wonderful ELL student who has enriched my life and changed my worldview. Dilshad grew up in Pakistan in a traditional Muslim community. She did not have the opportunity to attend school or have many other experiences outside of home. During her 15 years living in Milwaukee, her life continued to focus on her family and her mosque.

Dilshad first came to Literacy Services with her husband, who at that time communicated for her. She spoke little English, and had no reading or writing skills. She had recently obtained a driver's license which enabled her to travel to English class. I had only just signed up to volunteer, and Julie felt that because of my background in early childhood education, I would be a good match as a tutor for Dilshad. She couldn't have been more right!

From the beginning, our tutoring sessions have been held in a private area. This allowed Dilshad to learn in a relaxed and focused atmosphere. She has made great advances in all aspects of literacy. She reads short stories and discusses comprehension questions. She enjoys the humor in many of the stories and often recounts events from her own life that are brought to mind by our reading lessons. Dilshad has become much more confident about speaking English, and now she can communicate while shopping and at doctor's appointments. She even has her first job, caring for children of the teachers at her mosque. Because of the different language backgrounds of the children she works with, she has to use English at her job. She plans to become a certified child care worker, and we have spent some time reviewing background knowledge for that position.

Another goal that we are working towards is



U.S. citizenship. There's a lot to learn, but Dilshad is motivated and bright. It's just a matter of time until she reaches that next milestone.

It's interesting how this volunteer experience has impacted other aspects of my life. My daughter was excited to see the exhibit at City Hall about Muslims around the world. She had met Dilshad and her family and knew I would be interested in seeing the beautiful photographs depicting Muslim cultures. After seeing the exhibit myself, I took Dilshad and her daughter on their first trip to City Hall. They enthusiastically explained the photographs and shared their experiences in some of the places depicted. I was happy to experience that exhibit with Dilshad as she proudly spoke of her culture with me.

Dilshad is kind and generous. She often prepares traditional Pakistani food for me and members of the staff. Dilshad has had to adapt to my meatless diet by cooking vegetarian meals and is always happiest when she is doing things for others. She has welcomed me into her home, and I have enjoyed getting to know her family.

I would never have imagined that through volunteering I would make such a good friend and learn about another culture and way of life. I feel privileged to have this experience. It has expanded and enriched my world, and I look forward to tutoring each week.



Mobile-friendly is Student-friendly

By: Dustin Slane, Director of Marketing & IT

Ever since I started working at Literacy Services nearly 6 years ago, I really wanted to redesign the agency website to make it mobile-friendly. Having a mobile-friendly site is important for a lot of reasons. Mobile functionality allows the site to work well on tablets and smart phones, but it also is a requirement to be ranked highly in Google search results. I wanted to make sure that we were properly appearing on search results and wanted to give a mobile option to our visitors. Instead of painstakingly redesigning our entire website, a secondary mobile site was added. It was not a perfect solution. The mobile site was rudimentary at best and came with the unfortunate consequence of adding another website to manage.

In the spring of last year, I was presented with an opportunity to finally do it right. I submitted a proposal to UWM's School of Information Studies, which has an amazing program called Nonprofit. Under the leadership of Sr. Lecturer Adam Hudson, students participating in the program select proposals from local non-profit organizations to assist them with Information Technology support. To my delight, the proposal was selected by a team of four students: Monique Marie Schneider, Soojin Lee, Uny Peter Varh, and Eligio E. Vasquez Benitez. We quickly got to work.

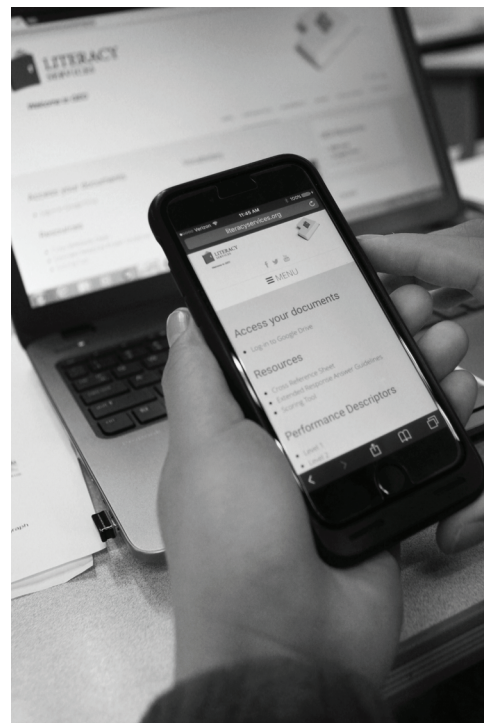
Over the course of the semester, the students logged over 300 hours of volunteer time! It was hard work that required many long nights. They weren't alone. To keep pace, I was responding to emails and offering suggestions after midnight on more than a few occasions. I took the partnership seriously and so did the students. Before they even started contemplating the re-design, they all took time to understand how Literacy Services works. They each observed the one-on-one process by shadowing a student and tutor pair in each

of our programs. They were engaged, insightful, and left inspired to take on the task at hand. By the end of the semester, Literacy Services had a fantastic new website that automatically resized depending on the device that was used to access it. It would have cost our agency about \$6,000-\$8,000 for a web development firm to create a similar site.

One of the most profound results of having a mobile-friendly website is its impact on student learning. Our students may not have a computer at home, but many have computers in their pockets in the form of smart phones. In a password-protected area of our website there is a virtual classroom for our GED students. It has been thrilling to hear about how students are diligently studying at bus stops, kitchen tables, and even in bed before they go to sleep. We believe in access to education, and having a mobile-friendly site helps ensure that our students have that access.

Another perk to the new website is the platform on which it was built. The students at UWM recommended that we start using Wordpress to build and manage our webpages. As a free online-based web design tool, Wordpress does a great job of making web design easy for novices while keeping the functionality in place for expert code writers to showcase their talents. Above all, it makes it much easier to involve volunteers in website maintenance. Volunteers will no longer need specialty design software or even a deep understanding of traditional website language, like HTML, to effectively contribute.

We are excited to see how the site will grow, especially with the inclusion of volunteer support. Websites are always a work in progress and we will continually need volunteers to help ensure that content is



Our new website puts resources for learning in the hands of our students, even when they are away from the classroom.

fresh. In the coming months we are hoping to add a bunch of new content and will be looking for volunteers with web development skills, especially those with Wordpress experience. In addition, we will be seeking contributing writers who can help update and create material to feature on the new site, our social media channels, and newsletters.

Please reach out to me at dustin@literacyservices.org if you are interested in helping Literacy Services continue to enhance our outward communications. Your feedback is welcomed, too. You should probably finish reading this newsletter, but afterwards go check out the new site!

www.literacyservices.org



Planning

continued from **Page 1**

worth the ink to write you about. In December, we received the respected “Service Enterprise Certification” from the national organization Points of Light, the world’s largest organization dedicated to volunteer service. This was no small accomplishment as they put us through our paces on our volunteer program processes, procedures, plans for recruitment, training and other best practices. We have a specific action plan in place to continue to engage even more volunteers in new ways to increase our organization’s capacity.

We were awarded one of two competitive \$100,000 grants from Impact100 Greater Milwaukee’s inaugural grant-making year to create a new High School Equivalency Diploma Program to prepare adults for careers in the construction trades. This project is in partnership with WRTP/BIG STEP, the leader in our community in preparing adults for construction jobs.

We launched our Strategic Planning process with 40 members of the Board of Directors, staff and volunteer tutor team in November to chart our course for the next three years. Watch for the new plan to be complete this spring.

We received an “exceeds expectations” rating from United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County for our GED Adult Education Program. United Way has a great accountability program to make sure that the resources donors give to the campaign are used to create the change in the community they wish to see. We are honored to be a partner agency and to be

recognized for our program’s impact. Special thanks to David Peters for his leadership and quality work in our GED program.

We created and launched our new Language Mechanics curriculum in our Adult Basic Education Program for Pre-GED level students. Kelly Fox and Bianca Ortiz did a wonderful job of adding new material to support students’ continued learning after they complete the rigors of the Wilson Reading System. The Language Mechanics curriculum moves students into important grammar, mechanics, vocabulary and reading comprehension skill development.

As the end of 2016 neared, we appealed to our supporters to help us bridge a projected \$20,000 gap in revenue for the year. Guess what? We did it! We are so humbled and grateful for such a terrific response from donors like you.

Last but not least, we began an exploration of a significant strategic alliance with another nonprofit organization. As I write you today, both boards of directors have approved moving forward with this new partnership. Please stay tuned for an official public announcement soon! Mark your calendar to join us on the evening of June 8 for our annual Awards Celebration Fundraising event. This year we invite you to a dinner to recognize our Tutor, Alumnus, Donor, and Students of Inspiration and to hear more about our new strategic alliance! I hope you will join us!

SAVE THE DATE!

2017 Awards Dinner - Thursday, June 8th, 5:00pm

Please mark your calendar to join us! Formal invitation to follow. Sponsorship and underwriting opportunities are available now. Contact Chad Knezel to learn more about supporting our event. Call 414-344-5878 or email chad@literacyservices.org.

Tiny Updates, Big News

Adult Basic Education

Robert opened his first bank account on his own.

Thomas is now able to find what he needs at stores.

When her company began outsourcing jobs, **Yvonne** was able to keep her position because of her dramatic improvements in reading and writing.

English Language Learning

Saleem passed his citizenship test!

Laura from Colombia got a job as a bilingual paraprofessional with Milwaukee Public Schools.

Jim, an ELL tutor, has turned his tutoring sessions with **Miguel** into walking tours of Milwaukee from the art museum to the public library.

GED Preparation

Jessica completed her GED and is now exploring a career in health care.

Terry passed his math test and entered pre-apprenticeship readiness preparation at WRTP/BIG STEP.

Rhonda got a job!

Keep up the good work, everyone!

Thank You!

In the space below we recognize all of the donors who made gifts or pledged support between November 24, 2016 and February 23, 2017.

Thank you on behalf of all the students who are motivated to improve their lives through education and learning at Literacy Services!

It is our commitment to recognize every donor based on the donor's wishes. If your name does not appear as you would expect, please contact Chad Knezel by phone at 414-344-5878, or via email at chad@literacyservices.org.

In-Kind & Book Donations

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 UE Local 1111 Retirees Association
 Wauwatosa Presbyterian Church
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 Wisconsin Literacy Inc.
 Women of ELCA Nativity

Memorials & Tributes

In honor of Julie Clark
 - *Lois Liners*
 In honor of James & Barbara Fisher
 - *Anne & Gregory Jurenec*
 In honor of Kelly Fox
 - *Steven Epstein*
 In honor of Kelly Fox & Bianca Ortiz
 - *David & Sandy Brusin*
 - *Henry & Leaella Shirley*
 In honor of Katelyn French
 - *Elliott Valentine*
 In honor of Lori Hanes
 - *Gregory & Rhonda Oberland*

In honor of Cecilia M. Hawley's 85th birthday
 - *Thomas Hawley*
 In honor of Jonathan Hayssen
 - *Joann & Carl Hayssen*
 In honor of Bill Murray
 - *Scott & Mary McFadden*
 In honor of Katie & Dr. Jerry Parent
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 In honor of The Reardon family
 - *Chad & Sherrill Knezel*
 In honor of Jim Schleif
 - *Joseph Horning*
 In honor of Dr. Molly Shiffler
 - *Marie Weiss*
 In honor of Sandy Stukenberg
 - *Lisa Stukenberg*
 In honor of Denise, Sue, & Mark
 - *Hyo Jin Han*
 In honor of Mary, Sue, Ted, & Julie
 - *Myunghee Jun*
 In honor of family, teachers, & classmates
 - *Barbara Olson*
 In memory of Don Blodgett
 - *David Hurlbutt*
 In memory of Mary Casey Brennan
 - *Brian Brennan*
 - *Risë Tucker*
 In memory of Ken Chelmowski
 - *Mark & Terri Chelmowski*
 In memory of Patricia Costello
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 In memory of Mary O'Connor Craig
 - *Karla Zimmerman*
 In memory of Jacqueline Hanson Dee
 - *Carolyn Biskupic*
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 - *Mary B. & Robert A. Jones*
 - *Marionne Koenigsberg*
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 In memory of Joyce Engstrom
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 In memory of Joseph Flanner
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 In memory of Darren Gilmore
 - *Ethel Cahill*
 In memory of Sara Hansen
 - *Joan & Jeff Hansen*
 In memory of Joy Botts and Ed Hinshaw
 - *Barbara L. Felix & James Vyvan*
 In memory of Mary Alice & Bob Rasmussen
 - *Rob L. Rasmussen*
 In memory of Robert Ripp
 - *Mary Stearns*
 In memory of Bob Schindler
 - *Mary Stearns*
 In memory of Pauline Scribner
 - *Marylyn & John Kaishian*
 In memory of Robert Wafle
 - *Henry & Leaella Shirley*

Thank You!



Service Enterprise

continued from **Page 1**

This is what the national organization, Points of Light, has to say about what it means to be a certified Service Enterprise: "Nonprofits that operate as Service Enterprises more effectively address community needs and run on almost half the median budget than those nonprofits that do not leverage volunteers across all levels of their organization. When an organization leverages volunteers, managing them effectively, it is in a better position to grow." Literacy Services learned through our training that our return on investment (ROI) of every dollar invested in our volunteer program produces \$3.32 in volunteer engagement and mission impact.

Our caring community, generous funders, and dedicated volunteers deserve an effective plan of volunteer engagement that provides best-in-class service and support. The Service Enterprise Initiative has given us a shared vision of how to expand our reach, improve our services, and diversify our volunteer program in ways that will more efficiently serve our mission. Stay tuned for new volunteer opportunities coming soon! Watch our website, newsletters, and the local volunteer opportunity website <https://volunteer.unitedwaygmwc.org> for new ways to get involved at Literacy Services.

When you are ready to give:

From online giving to employer matching programs, there are many ways to support our students' hard work. A deferred gift can help you balance your financial goals and your charitable interests - all while possibly achieving significant tax benefits. In-kind gifts, such as books, copy paper, or coffee, can be a simple way to contribute to the work of our students and tutors.

Literacy Services has thrived for over 50 years, thanks in part to generous donors who have remembered LSW in their wills. Gifts of appreciated stock and mutual funds from supporters over 70-1/2 years old have also benefited both the donor and Literacy Services. Contact Ginger Duiven if you would like more information or to make a contribution this year to take advantage of the tax benefits.

Together we are changing lives and our community!

Special Thanks

Thank You to all who pledged a gift to Literacy Services during United Way's 2016 Campaign since our last newsletter:

Bob & Shirley Anthony
 Deborah Bjorn
 Laura & Matt Crespin
 Ms. Barbara Fuldner
 Andrea Roschke & John Gaebler
 Jean Hanrahan

Ted & Mary Kellner
 Timothy & Mary Klabunde
 David & Madeleine Lubar
 Daniel F. Madigan, III
 Thomas Snieg
 Julia & David Uihlein Charitable Foundation

Calendar Bookmarks

Student Enrollment

Accepting New Students! Sign-up for our Initial Assessment Sessions. Call **414-344-5878** for available dates and times.

March

7th - Volunteer Orientation 9:30-10:30am

22nd - Volunteer Orientation 5:30-6:30pm

April

4th - VOTE - Spring Election

5th - Spring Honors Celebration

Noon-1:00pm

6th - Volunteer Orientation 9:30-10:30am

10th-14th - Spring Break No Classes

18th - Volunteer Orientation Noon-1:00pm

May

9th - Volunteer Orientation 9:30-10:30am

25th - Volunteer Orientation 5:30-6:30pm

29th - Memorial Day Agency Closed

June

6th - Volunteer Orientation 9:30-10:30am

8th - 2017 Awards Dinner 5:00pm

22nd - Volunteer Orientation Noon-1:00pm

July

4th - Independence Day Agency Closed

11th - Summer Honors Celebration

Noon-1:00pm

13th - Volunteer Orientation 9:30-10:30am

26th - Volunteer Orientation 5:30-6:30pm

Visit literacyservices.org/events for more information about upcoming events.

Unsubscribe

We hope you enjoy reading about our mission, but we understand if you would prefer not to receive our mailing. To be removed from our mailing list, simply send a message to chad@literacyservices.org or call us at **414-344-5878**.

Announcements



Meet Theresa: Our New Assistant Director of ELL

The ELL program is very happy to welcome **Theresa Liu** to our staff. Theresa joins us as another Assistant ELL Director. She holds a B.A. in English from Mount Mary College and TESOL (Teaching English as a Second Language) certification from International TEFL and TESOL Training (ITTT). After nearly 20 years in marketing and communications, Theresa decided to pursue her passion for English Language Learning. She has been a volunteer tutor in the ELL program since 2015 and also works as a tutor at the Center for Self-Sufficiency. She loves music and baking. She also enjoys traveling with her husband and spending time with her big Italian family.

Board Member Updates



Literacy Services is pleased to welcome **Daniel M. LaFrenz**, Associate at Michael Best & Friedrich LLP, as the newest member of our Board of Directors. Daniel's leadership is driven from his experience with business and tax law issues as well as non-profit organization consultation. Welcome aboard, Daniel!



At our December board meeting we said thank you to **Kim Metcalf-Kupres** as she completed her term and stepped off our board. We are so grateful to her for her seven years of service on our Board of Directors including a term as President. Thank you, Kim, for all you have done for LSW during this important period and for all of your many generous contributions to the success of this important work. We will miss you!

Parking Reminder

What's new?

- You may now park in any available spot on our rooftop!
- Your license plate number must be reported to our receptionist upon arrival if you park in a spot that does not feature our logo

What is the same?

- Help us save costs and park in spots with our logo first
- You **DO NOT** have to report to the receptionist with your license plate number if you are parked in a spot marked with our logo
- **DO NOT** park on the 2nd floor of our building
- Parking at The Shops of Grand Avenue is still available