



Defining Literacy

By: Holly McCoy, Executive Director

Literacy Services is reimagining what literacy is and what it can be. Over the last three years, we have been implementing our strategic vision that focuses on the future of this work and ensuring that we are doing all that we can to make an impact and cause a ripple effect within our community. Indeed, adult literacy is interconnected with many of the goals our city is aiming to improve on. While unemployment remains low, there are still disparities between Milwaukee and the rest of the state.

Individuals at the lowest literacy and numeracy levels have a higher rate of unemployment and earn lower wages than the national average.

Low literacy costs the U.S. at least \$225 billion each year in non-productivity in the workforce, crime, and loss of tax revenue due to unemployment.. - ProLiteracy

While many initiatives throughout the city are making an impact on traditional K-12 educational targets and working to improve reading and numeracy levels for school-age children, we are working with parents to ensure that children are able to get the support they need at home. If two

see **The Definition** continued on page 2



Hoon Kim, a PhD candidate at Marquette University and ELL student at LSW, was recently published for his biomechanics research.



ELL Student Published in Journal of Orthopaedic Research

By: Patrice Vnuk, ELL Program Director - Downtown

As our tutors and staff know, the students at Literacy Services of Wisconsin are hard-working, talented, and inspirational. We recognize and celebrate their accomplishments, both big and seemingly small. Every now and then, these accomplishments are recognized outside of our organization as well. One such example is the work of Hoon Kim, a PhD candidate at Marquette University and a student enrolled in Literacy Services' ELL (English Language Learning) Program at the Downtown Center. Hoon, who is a graduate assistant in the physical therapy department and a biomechanics researcher, had a scholarly article published last month by the *Journal of Orthopaedic Research*. According to him, this accomplishment would not have been possible without help from Literacy Services and his tutor, Ann Marie.

Hoon arrived in the United States in June of 2015 as a new student at the University of

Nebraska Omaha. There, he completed the athletic training program, and began looking for a job. Because of his status as a foreign worker and his relatively limited English skills, the job search was ultimately unsuccessful. Rather than give up, Hoon decided to further his education in biomechanics and English in order to improve his career options. He was accepted into Marquette University's Physical Therapy PhD program in Exercise and Rehabilitation Science, and has been studying and conducting research there ever since.

When Hoon and his wife, Ahhee, moved to Milwaukee, they enrolled in LSW's ELL Program, making time in their already-busy schedules for supplementary English lessons. LSW was their organization of choice for several reasons: It was affordable and accessible, and it provided instruction for the conversational and daily life skills in English that other programs do not. Like many other

The Syllabus

Literacy Services of Wisconsin Newsletter



The Definition

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

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Volunteer Photographer

Sara Risley

Founded in 1965, Literacy Services serves adult learners with quality education programs - Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Education Development (GED) test preparation, 5.09 High School Equivalent Diploma (HSED), English Language Learning (ELL), Workforce Training and Career Pathway Bridges, and integrated and personalized Functional Literacy instruction.

Literacy Services of Wisconsin is grateful for the broad support of our community, including over 500 volunteers and financial support from 1000 individuals; 196 foundations, corporations and organizations; The United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County; and Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. We are grateful for our partnerships with ResCare and Milwaukee Public Schools.

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out of five Milwaukee adults is reading at or below a third grade level, what happens when their children reach fourth or fifth grade? Making Milwaukee education better requires an intergenerational approach.

Children of parents with low literacy skills have a **72 percent chance of being at the lowest reading levels** themselves.

These children are more likely to get poor grades, display behavioral problems, have high absentee rates, repeat school years, or drop out. - ProLiteracy

We are proud to offer comprehensive programming that supports our students' goals no matter where or when they start their academic journeys. Literacy Services' definition of literacy highlights how interconnected adult literacy is with all areas of growth and success for individuals, families, and communities. The impact of our work extends throughout our community, and we strive to demonstrate this in increasingly visible ways.

We hope that this definition helps us and you (our wonderful supporters) better articulate what literacy means in the 21st Century:

lit·er·a·cy

'lɪdəɾəsē, 'lɪtrəsē

Literacy is a proficient foundation of skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking, communication, numeracy, digital, and analytical) and the resulting abilities to develop and reach one's goals; interact with the community; access all forms of information, opportunities, and resources; make informed decisions and solve problems; and improve economic stability and social relationships for personal empowerment.





ELL Scholar

By: Patrice Vnuk, ELL Program Director – Downtown

ELL students at Literacy Services, Hoon had studied English in school before coming to the United States. However, the nature of this English curriculum was academic, and it was mostly intended for test-taking and other classroom applications. Hoon wanted to learn how to communicate with insurance providers, how to order food in restaurants, and how to have friendly conversations with his colleagues in addition to learning professional and technical English. LSW's low-stakes, welcoming environment ended up being the answer to what would help Hoon and his wife reach their goals.

Hoon was happy to sit down and share some of his sentiments and insights about our ELL program, life as an international student, and a little more detail about the research presented in his article.

How has LSW helped you in your daily life?

Hoon: My tutor, Ann Marie, she always lets me understand culture first. Whenever I ask [about] English grammar or prepositions or idioms or weird sentences to me, she always tells me the cultural history [behind] them. For example, Christmas. We knew about Christmas already, but our understanding was just [that] Christmas is a holiday. But she told me about it from the origins.... She always explains and answers my questions with examples. From those examples, I can experience these things indirectly.

Was it difficult to adjust to life in the United States?

Hoon: Yes. In school there is no problem, because they already know there are a lot of international students, so when we have questions or problems, they always help us. But outside of school, normal people—or most people—don't assume we are from another country. Their speaking is very fast,

and they don't care about my understanding level. I know why they are doing it, because they are busy, but for me it was very hard to get an apartment and insurance, and with insurance there are many, many, many options. Somebody gave me a lot of paper and said, "just sign!" But I didn't know what it was!

Can you explain briefly what your article is about?

Hoon: This is academic practice for me, like an elevator pitch, or at a conference! In ankle-foot complex biomechanics research, we are using a motion capture system. When we use that [system], we need a biomechanical foot model. [In the multi-segmented foot model], the number of segments... didn't [matter] to many researchers. I always wondered if perhaps the number of segments within the foot model influences results. That was my research question. I found very, very critical differences [in the results] according to the number of segments. So, my conclusion is when you research foot and ankle motion with motion capture, we must consider which number of segments is good for us.

What would you say you can do now that you couldn't do before you came to LSW?

Hoon: Actually, I didn't realize my improvement, but Ann Marie told me my English has improved. Nowadays, I am realizing my improvement and improving speed, especially in writing. [Ann Marie] always taught me prepositions and verb tenses, and I realized whenever I finished a draft for a manuscript or a short abstract, my advising professor would always edit it with a lot of corrections, rephrasing, and different words. Now he doesn't edit it much, just a little bit. "S" errors and "-ed" errors. So I realized, oh, my writing skill has definitely improved! On my University of Nebraska



homework, all my papers were [covered in] red pen marks. Not anymore!

What do you hope to do with your improved English skills?

Hoon: My next step is not being afraid before doing things in English that I don't have a lot of experience with, and repetitive trials. I am trying not to hesitate to do something in the USA. In Korea, if I wanted a drink, I didn't hesitate to go to a pub. But here, I am hesitating because of many things. First is money, but money is always a problem. But [it's also] because of culture and my English, because of not perfect ordering. So, when I order some food, like sausage or potato chips, or the many, many sauces, I don't know those things. I was hesitating to ask what it is, because I was afraid to ask them and most afraid about understanding what they are answering. Lately, that has improved, but I have still some hesitations. I don't want to be afraid!

Hoon Kim's article,

Number of segments within musculoskeletal foot models influence ankle kinematics and strains of ligaments and muscles*

can be found on Google Scholar.

* Written with co-author and advising professor Kristof Kipp

Tiny Updates, Big News

Thang passed his citizenship test and was promoted to CNC Operator.

Samaneh gave a lecture at a conference.

William got his HSED.

Elisabeth received a \$2/hour raise.

Selamawit got a library card.

Mersedes passed her citizenship test.

Thao got his HSED.

Esperanza was nominated as an "Outstanding Mother" by her daughter's school.

Darlene got a promotion.

Eloisa got her HSED.

Michael completed service technician training.

Silvia spoke to her community church in front of 100 people and felt more confident than the last time she gave a presentation.

Deborah got her HSED.

Juana passed her citizenship test.

Flahleesha completed a typing class.

Earline got her HSED.

Demetrius started reading to his 3-year-old daughter.

Alan is managing his money and his credit score has improved.

Keep up the good work!

Meet Our Newest Staff Member

Mikelle Bloechl

Assistant Program Director - Layton Center



I am both thrilled and honored to join Literacy Services of Wisconsin as Assistant Program Director with the LSW Layton Center and work alongside a dedicated team with an unwavering commitment to enriching the lives of individuals and the community! Having worked in the field of economic and social development for many years, the opportunity to be with Literacy Services and continue empowering individuals, adults, and families to help them achieve their goals is truly a privilege.

I studied Fine Art at UW Milwaukee and later went on to complete my master's degree in education with a concentration on adult education administration, which is where my interest in adult education and human services took root. In my free time, I look forward to spending time with my 8-year-old son and our puppy, "Yelly."

Welcome

A Fond Farewell

Adriana Vázquez

Program Director/Instructor
- South MPS Learning Lab

Adriana started at Milwaukee Achiever about 5 years ago teaching ELL for our workplace literacy program. Since then, she has helped create State ELL standards and expand our South Division program. Adriana is leaving us to lead a bilingual program in Waukesha. She has been a wonderful colleague and advocate for her students. We wish her well and will miss her greatly!



"How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard." – Winnie The Pooh



Our Welcoming Committee

By: Mikelle Bloechl, Assistant Program Director - Layton Center

Before joining Literacy Services of WI, I had the pleasure of partnering with LSW while in my previous role with SER National - Senior Community Service Employment Program (SER-SCSEP). Through this partnership I became familiar with LSW services and have always admired their contributions to our communities. To be a part of such an important organization is an honor. Because of my prior experiences working with LSW, I know that their impact reaches far beyond the services they deliver within their extensive range of educational programming.

For nearly 10 years through their partnership with SER-SCSEP, LSW has been central to helping mature job seekers obtain skills needed to re-enter the workforce. SCSEP, a federally-funded program that provides training and job development services to adults who are 55 and older, partners with

non-profit agencies such as LSW to help this population receive hands-on job training. As a host agency partner, LSW accommodates SER-SCSEP participants with community service assignments where they are given the opportunity to actively engage in job functions associated with their employment interests and gain the skills necessary to compete for employment.

Participants who are placed at Literacy Services become part of the front desk reception team at the downtown location. They answer phones, greet visitors, and handle a multitude of additional tasks. During the process, they build communication skills and become more comfortable with computers and data entry. The impact LSW has had in improving the lives of older adults seeking skills for employment is extensive, thanks to staff involvement and dedication to

SER-SCSEP participants. SCSEP is the only program that focuses entirely on the workforce development of older adults; organizations like LSW are critical in the important effort of providing important skills to this growing population of job seekers.

Shortly after coming to Literacy Services, I was thrilled to learn that two SER-SCSEP participants (Bryant Kimborough and Sherry Prescott) continue to receive job training with LSW, and even more exciting, one of the SER- SCSEP participants training at LSW, Ms. Sherry Prescott, would be hired on as permanent staff! This was especially significant to me as Sherry was my client while I was functioning as a case worker with SER-SCSEP. The next time you see her, congratulate her on becoming our new Lead Front Desk Representative!

Meet the faces behind the front desk



Sherry Prescott

My earlier work experience as a certified nursing assistant took me to hospitals, nursing homes, and private in-home care for over 30 years. I couldn't do nursing work anymore due to medical problems, so I decided to change my career. A friend told me about the SER National Program, so I signed up. I explained my situation and SER said they could help. I mentioned I always wanted to be a receptionist, but I had no receptionist skills or experience. SER gave me three host site options and I chose Literacy Services. They have trained me to be a front desk receptionist and administrative assistant. I thank LSW so much for accepting me as a trainee. It's been an amazing four years learning a new trade and about LSW and what they do for our community.

I enjoy spending my free time taking care of people and preparing food boxes for the homeless through my church, and I love attending church services.



Bryant Kimborough

A gentleman in my building told me about SER jobs temp service for 55 and older, so I went and put in an application. I had a choice of several different positions and locations, and I chose LSW. I am very happy with my decision because of the location, the service it provides, the wonderful staff, the grateful clientele, and the significant student achievements.

Most of my job history is in the IT Field doing Field Service work, Phone Support and Help Desk, and as a Customer Service Representative.

I am the proud father of two children, who have brought me three grandkids. My favorite pastime is singing and listening to music. I enjoy reading, watching a good movie, and exercising to stay in shape and keep fit.



Volunteer Handbook & Survey

By: Corrie Kennedy, Volunteer Coordinator

Greetings, Volunteers! As many of you are aware, we recently put our official volunteer handbook into the universe and we thank you for taking the time to read it and confirm you understand the contents.

If you are a volunteer and have not read the handbook, we encourage you to visit the "Volunteer" tab on our website to access the handbook. On the last page you will find a link that brings you to a "Confirmation of Receipt" page and our Volunteer Survey. We appreciate you taking the time to give us feedback on our programs and training. We can't wait to take in all of your suggestions, improve our volunteer program, and share with you what we've learned. Please reach out if you have any questions or issues accessing the handbook and survey. Thank you for sharing our commitment to continuous learning and growing.

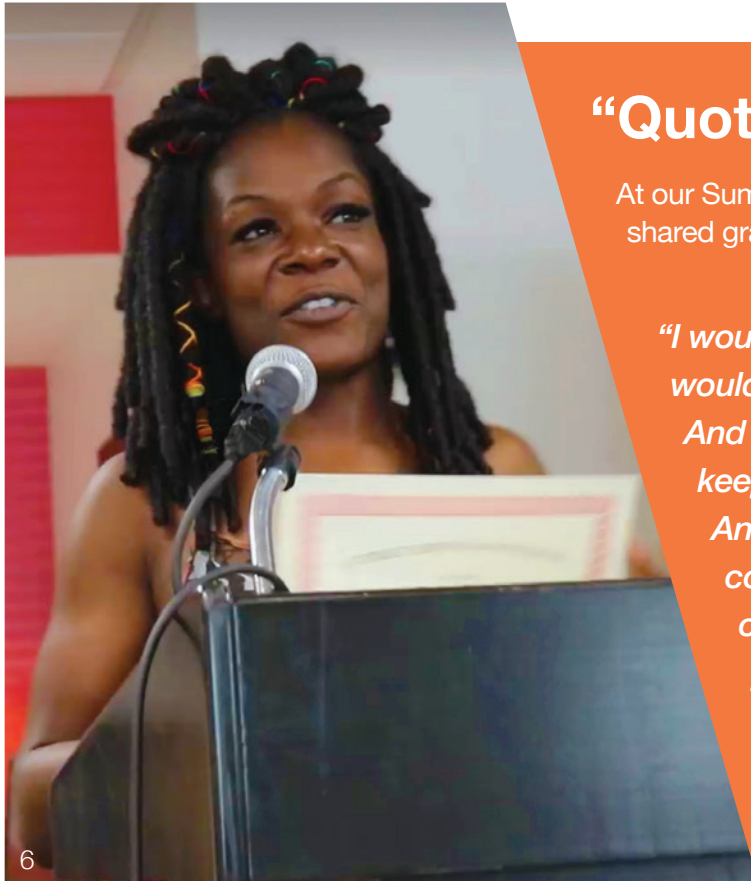
Improve the WiFi!

It has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life.

Could you develop a better way to notify tutors with early sessions when students can't come in?

No recognition is needed - I just love to see my student's progress.

I hate the parking garage.



"Quote of the Quarter"

At our Summer Quarterly Honors Celebration, ASE student, Tanica, shared gratitude to our staff and volunteer tutors.

"I would like to say thank you to all of the volunteers. I would like to say thank you to all of the instructors. And why? Because you guys put in so much effort to keeping us focused and staying on the right track. And keeping us motivated and encouraged to keep coming back here and push forward with reaching our goals and being successful. That's AWESOME you guys! Thank you." -Tanica

Our next Autumn Honors Celebration is at 5:15pm on October 8th at our Downtown center. See you there!

Upcoming Events

\$1 for Milwaukee

Gathering Place Brewing Company

811 E. Vienna Ave, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212

Thursday, August 22, 2019 • 3 PM – 10 PM

LSW is partnering with Gathering Place Brewing Company in Riverwest for their \$1 for Milwaukee program to spread awareness of Literacy Services and the work we do. Gathering Place Brewing Company, located at 811 E. Vienna Ave, will generously donate to LSW \$1 for every \$6 pint sold on Thursday, August 22nd from 3-10pm. Come show your support for LSW, a local brewery, and our community. We hope to see you there!



Volunteer Appreciation Party

Johnson Controls Volunteer Center

225 West Vine Street, Milwaukee, WI 53212

Thursday, September 26, 2019 • 5 PM – 7 PM

Volunteers, please allow us to thank you for empowering our students and making our community stronger each day. Save the date to join us for dinner and enjoy a short program with words of gratitude from our students, staff, and board.

Formal invitations will be emailed soon. Ask a staff member for more information.



Event Calendar

August

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

19th-30th - Summer Break

No Classes

20th - Volunteer Orientation 5:30-6:30pm

22nd - \$1 for Milwaukee 3:00-10:0pm

Gathering Place Brewing Company

\$1 donated to LSW for every \$6 pint sold

28th-30th - Staff Retreat

All Sites Closed

September

2nd - Labor Day

All Sites Closed

5th - Volunteer Orientation 9:30-10:30am

17th - Volunteer Orientation 5:30-6:30pm

26th - Volunteer Appreciation Party 5pm

No Classes After 1pm

October

1st - Volunteer Orientation 9:30-10:30am

8th - Autumn Honors Celebration

5:15pm - Downtown Center

15th - Volunteer Orientation 5:30-6:30pm

November

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

19th - Volunteer Orientation 5:30-6:30pm

27th - All sites close at 1pm

28th-29th - Thanksgiving

All Sites Closed

December

5th - Volunteer Orientation 9:30-10:30am

18th - Winter Honors Celebration

11:45am - Downtown Center

Winter Break

All sites closed Dec. 23rd - Jan. 3rd

January

20th - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

All Sites Closed

Student Enrollment

Accepting new students! Sign up for our Initial Assessment Sessions. Call 414-344-5878 for available dates and times.

Thank You!

The following donors made gifts or pledged support between February 16, 2019 and June 30, 2019. Many of the donors listed generously supported *Decoding Literacy*, our 2019 Inspiration Awards & Fundraising Dinner, through monetary gifts as well as donations of silent auction items. Thank you for this important support that helped us raise funds beyond our goals for the event.

Thank you for empowering adult students to read and write their way to a better future. We promise to put your gifts to good work! 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 at (414) 226-5357 or via email at chad@literacyservices.org.

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 The Milwaukee Kappa Kappa Gamma
 Alumnae Association
 Town Bank
 Travelers Community Connections
 Truist
 U.S. Bancorp Foundation
 We Energies
 We Energies Foundation
 Wisconsin Literacy Inc.
 Wisconsin Romance Writers of America
 WRTP/BIG STEP
 XPRIZE Foundation

Memorials

In memory of Sally Breckenridge
 - *John Breckenridge*
 In memory of Beth Felix
 - *Aura Hirschman*
 In memory of Joe Flanner
 - *William & Jan Severson*
 In memory of Edward F. Hanlon
 - *Jeff Martinka*

In memory of Salvatore (Teddy) Lorino
 - *Robert & Theresa Muselman*
 In memory of Barbara Pluta
 - *Robert & Theresa Muselman*
 In memory of Norma Pokorny
 - *George R. Pokorny*
 In memory of Susan Robertson
 - *Panagiota Dobogai*
 In memory of Shirley Sweet
 - *Debbie Fagan*
 In memory of Doris Robbins Wilke
 - *Juanita Ehrke*

Tributes

In Tribute to Joseph Banks
 - *Rosalie Tocco*
 In honor of Jessica Obenauf
 - *Sheralynn Nichols*
 In honor of Sue Martin-Steiner
 - *Kathryn Reinardy*
 In honor of Jean Sunby
 - *Jessica Obenauf*
 In honor of tutors Diane Wolfson &
 Mary Raebel
 - *Bokrae Jung & Sunjoung Lee*
 In honor of Kathleen Zaug
 - *Sarah Zaug*

In honor of Robin Brisco's 20th Anniversary

Anonymous
 Kristin Bigley
 Carol Brown
 Ken Buesing
 Bennie Burdette
 Cheryl Butterfield
 Jan Constable
 Patricia Delmenhorst
 Leroy Doyle
 Clarence Evans
 Vicki A. Farrell
 Kelly Fox
 Beth Gosnell
 Dan & Cynthia Graham
 James Greer
 Joe Ann Griffin
 Jean Haase
 Joan & Jeff Hansen
 Mary Beth Harkness
 Nicole Hartley

Marcy Harvieux
 Patricia Hayes
 Mark & Janet Hogan
 Lavonski Jackson
 Diane Jakubowski
 Frettie Johnson
 Nate Jorgensen
 Carol Josten
 Sharon King
 Marty Kleiber
 Chad & Sherrill Knezel
 Amy Krenzke
 Richard Krueger
 Pamela Lardinois
 Yvonne Larme & Harvey Kurtz
 Earl & Marcy Larson
 Larry & Mary LeBlanc
 Grace Liebenstein
 Mary Ann & David Lindberg
 Melissa Mann

Sue Martin-Steiner & Anthony Steiner
 Scott & Mary McFadden
 Judy Miller
 Amy & Robert Monahan
 Jay & Betty Moore
 Brian Moreno
 Karen Nelson
 Tom Neubauer
 Norma Padin
 Nancy Pajewski
 Allen & Beverly Pfaff
 Sally A. Post
 Joyce Radtke
 Mary Ellen Raney
 Rob L. Rasmussen
 Richard Reid
 Juan & Elizabeth Rivera
 Kenny Roberson
 Jomar Feliciano Rosa
 Evelyn Sappenfield

Pam Schaar
 Jeewon Schally
 Bobbie Schmitt
 Rozanne Screven
 Peggy Serrano
 Henry & Leaella Shirley
 Dustin Slane
 Mark & Nancy Smuckler
 Susan Stewart
 Denise & Mark Strong
 Sandy Sykora
 Jane Tanner
 Rosalie Tocco
 Ozell Ware
 Maureen & Bill Warmuth
 Margi Wasson
 Richard & Beverly Weeden
 Gary & Joan Weida
 Marie Weiss
 Barbara Werner

When you are ready to give:

There are many ways to support our students' hard work!

- Gifts of cash
- In-kind gifts such as furniture, books, or office supplies (check out the wish list on our website for current needs)
- Deferred income gifts, including charitable gift annuities and charitable remainder trusts
- Bequests to Literacy Services as part of a will and last testament
- Gifts of stock, mutual funds, and other securities (may be additional benefits for supporters over 70 ½ years old)



Two Milestones for Two Amazing Women

By: Bianca Johnson-Ortiz, ABE Program Director - Downtown

Robin is the mother hen at our downtown location. Her warmth and welcoming persona greet our incoming students as they learn about Literacy Services at our enrollment sessions. Robin knows first-hand how daunting the enrollment process can be because she started as a student at LSW over 20 years ago. She remembers the feelings of doubt and embarrassment, and she shares that with our students to help ease their anxiety. Just like any other mom, she also sets the ground rules: respect and putting in effort will open your future at LSW. Robin joined our staff as a part-time receptionist and program assistant. She is now our Assistant Operations Director and a master at running the downtown location smoothly. Robin attributes her long service to being deeply in love with the transformation of our students; she describes it as watching a plant blossom with the right care and love. Kelly Fox led a super-secret campaign to surprise Robin at her 20th anniversary by asking volunteers and students to make a donation in her honor and to write her notes of appreciation. Robin was overjoyed by the outpouring of love by our community!

Kelly Fox, Director of Specialized Education & Program Evaluation, celebrated her 10th anniversary in May! She is known for her love of dogs and Literacy Services. Kelly began as a



Together, Kelly Fox and Robin Brisco bring a total of 30 years of life-changing service to the LSW community.

volunteer tutor of the Wilson Reading System (WRS) as a service learner from UWM at our downtown location. The ABE program director at the time quickly recognized Kelly's organizational talents and love of the Wilson program and hired her on as part-time program coordinator. Kelly's position grew over time to become ABE Program Director, where her investment of love and care transformed the program to become deeply connected to serving the needs of our students, volunteers, and community. Her heart beams for every student who makes a skill gain. She has

strived to make every encounter at Literacy Services the very best because she's sincerely invested in the LSW mission. I'm proud to call Kelly my mentor, friend, and colleague – I have learned from the very best and will continue to honor her legacy. Please consider making a donation in honor of Kelly's incredible service!

Literacy Services is truly grateful for the many years from Robin and Kelly. They both have influenced the culture of our organization to make it better each and every day. **Congrats!**

To all that honored me with a donation to Literacy Services to celebrate my 20th anniversary at LSW,

I thank each and every one of you from the deepest part of my heart. It is very hard to believe that it's been 20 years, because coming to LSW to work has been one of the best life choices I've made. For two decades, I have been honored to serve LSW's mission alongside so many amazing and inspirational students, volunteers, and staff. Working at LSW hasn't always been easy and some periods were difficult, but all the wonderful people here kept me going when times were hard. Many former students, volunteers, and staff remain my dear and close friends that I'll always cherish. To this day, I continue to be blown away by how generous, supportive, and compassionate LSW people are. Each and every one of you is a blessing to our organization, to our community, and to me. I am deeply humbled and moved by the kindness of your donation in my honor. Thank you for making a gesture to recognize my years of service, and thank you for all that you do for LSW! I promise, I'm not going anywhere anytime soon.

♥ -Robin



The Syl·la·bus

Summer 2019

Literacy Services of Wisconsin Newsletter

In this issue:

- **ELL Student is Published**
- **Our Definition of Literacy**
- **Meet our Greeters**
- **Volunteer Handbook & Survey**
- **And more!**



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