



Embracing Intelligences

By: Holly McCoy-Perez, Executive Director

Community Mural Unveiling. From left: Colin Hutt, LSW Past President; Holly McCoy-Perez, Executive Director; Tia Richardson, Muralist; Krista Galbraith and Jamy Malatesta of YPO.

Literacy Services' 60th anniversary year was incredible. The opening of our new headquarters was rightly front and center in so much of the celebration. I also want to highlight a few things that may not have been as directly stated. Howard Gardner, developer of the theory of multiple intelligences, defines effective learning as an engaging, personalized process centered on deep understanding and passion. He famously noted, "You learn at your best when you have something you care about and can get pleasure in being engaged in."

That has been true for me throughout my leadership journey at Literacy Services of Wisconsin (LSW). This work matters deeply to me, and that sense of purpose has fueled both my growth as a leader and my continued commitment to our mission.

As I enter my eighth year leading this incredible mission, I remain deeply grateful for all that we have accomplished together. Yes, the 1737 N. Palmer building both deepens and

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The Syllabus

Literacy Services of Wisconsin Newsletter

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

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Photography by volunteer Sara Risley, unless otherwise credited.

Founded in 1965, Literacy Services serves adult learners with quality education programs - Adult Education (AE), General Education Development (GED) test preparation, 5.09 High School Equivalency 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 more than 300 volunteers and financial support from 1000 individuals; 200 foundations, corporations and organizations; The United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County; and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. We are grateful for our partnerships with Equus, Maximus, and Milwaukee Public Schools.

1737 N Palmer Street
Milwaukee, WI 53212
(414) 344-5878

literacyservices.org
info@literacyservices.org

Congratulations, 2025 Summer & Winter GED/HSED Graduates!



Photo credit: Top three images by NTG Visuals Media, bottom three images by LSW staff.



Intelligences

Continued from Page 1



solidifies our roots in Milwaukee’s educational community. At the same time, we have made significant progress in our field (high-level, in no particular order):



Being recognized as a top Adult Education and Family Literacy Act provider by Wisconsin Technical College System for the seventh year in a row (which means we are effective)



Co-locating on-site at the Milwaukee County Jail in 2020 to provide access to GED preparation and testing and fill a critical gap in services



Merging with Greater Waukesha Literacy in 2020 to streamline programming and resources



Intentionally partnering with MATC & WCTC to provide onsite programming and direct access to college programming



Expanding Integrated Education and Training options for adult students seeking to complete a high school diploma and a recognized credential simultaneously in construction and manufacturing through our partnership with WRTP | BIG STEP



Working diligently with corrections organizations and Wisconsin Department of Corrections in Racine to create opportunities for those who are incarcerated and those returning to Milwaukee



Co-locating at Silver Spring Neighborhood Center in 2019 to ensure critical adult education programming on the Northwest side and implementing a geographically focused Milwaukee blueprint



Updating HSED curriculum to better align with current workforce needs and to be responsive to college- and career-readiness, including the addition of our unique HSED-EL that supports English learners

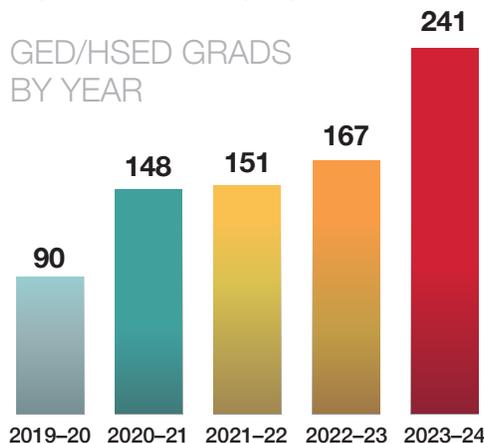
Much of our focus this year will be on sustaining this work. We are grateful for the support you have provided as we thought bigger and reached more of our community through adult education. We remain committed to ensuring that adult literacy education stays at the forefront of the many areas it intersects with, including K–12 outcomes, workforce development strategies, and support for adults working to strengthen their literacy. Our foundation is solid.

Much like Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences, LSW centers students’ unique experiences to create a safe learning space that honors individual academic strengths.

Last fiscal year, **we reached the highest number of graduates in our history: 303.**

To put that number in perspective:

GED/HSED GRADS BY YEAR



Over the past seven years, we have supported more than 1,100 adults in completing their high school diploma, made possible by the extraordinary support of the LSW community. Beyond these graduates, thousands more adults have enrolled in LSW programming, strengthened foundational literacy skills, advanced in the workforce, entered postsecondary education, and taken meaningful steps toward long-term stability for themselves and their families. Whether you volunteer, make referrals, partner to strengthen programming, attend an event, donate, or simply speak our name in spaces where we are not yet present, **thank you.**

Thank You!

The following donors made gifts or pledged support between August 1 and December 31, 2025. 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 Madison Olig via email at MOlig@literacyservices.org or by phone at (414) 344-5878.

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\$5/month • Provides GED practice test vouchers for 15 students.



\$40/month • Supports a student through an entire 16-week high school certification course.

Questions about giving or joining our Legacy of Literacy Society?

Call Madison Olig at (414) 344-5878 or email MOlig@literacyservices.org

International Literacy Month

Last September, we marked International Literacy Month by bringing books directly into the heart of our community. Our street team shared free hardcovers and paperbacks at MKE Books & Beers' Adult Book Fair, Silver City Fest, and Doors Open Milwaukee.

Milwaukee's Biggest Free Library once again transformed Kosciuszko Park into a vibrant hub of literacy, resources, and family-friendly fun. Hundreds of books found new homes, as families gathered to celebrate the simple, powerful joy of reading together.

The afternoon was punctuated by vibrance and soaring energy. The event opened with the color-filled movements of the Ometochtli Mexican Folk Dance group. Later, LSW alumnus Charles Grant arrived with The Milwaukee Flyers. The youth tumbling team he mentors delivered a high-flying performance that brought cheers and reminded us what's possible when young people are supported and encouraged.

We are so grateful for volunteers, participants, and guests who brought the event to life. Thank you to our wonderful co-host and the founder of Milwaukee's Biggest Free Little Library, Barby The Book Fairy, for teaming up with us to distribute reading material throughout our community. Special thanks to Komatsu Mining, Kosciuszko Community Center, Milwaukee Flyers, Ometochtli Mexican Folk Dance Group, Soberalski Immigration Law, LLC, Zurn Elkay Water Solutions, and United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County for supporting this year's event.



Save the date!

Milwaukee's Biggest Free Library will be back at Kosciuszko Park on Friday, August 28, 2026.





Students Open Kumi Sushi

Bringing Fresh Asian Cuisine to Waukesha

By: *Hannah Lingenfelter, Manager of Waukesha Operations*

Artful sushi rolls, delicious ramen and only a block from Literacy Services of Wisconsin's downtown Waukesha office, Kumi Sushi is now open! The restaurant is the second for Teng (Jason) Li and Yurong (Jessica) Chen who also own Asiana off Capitol Drive in Pewaukee. The husband-and-wife business partners not only own and personally manage the two restaurants, but are also English language students at LSW.

Jason and Jessica moved to Wisconsin from China ten years ago and immediately started working in the service industry. They bought Asiana a few years later. After six years of serving the Lake Country community through Asiana, Jason and Jessica opened Kumi Sushi to an excited crowd on December 18, 2025, at 363 W. Main Street in Waukesha (formerly Mountaintop Coffee). They were sometimes so busy in the holiday season that Jason and Jessica said, "We would work until 2:00 a.m. most nights, but the recognition and happiness of our customers is the best part of our job."

For Jason and Jessica, opening Kumi Sushi is the realization of years of perseverance, growth, and learning. Their advice for other immigrants hoping to open their own business: "Being serious and hardworking is the basic requirement for anyone who wants to build their own business. It's also important to take advantage of opportunities." Those opportunities include enrolling in Literacy Services of Wisconsin's English language tutoring program. Despite their busy work schedules, they meet with English language tutors as often as possible. Working with their tutors builds confidence in speaking and listening, helping them communicate clearly with their patrons and navigate the demands of daily business operations.



If you want to visit Asiana or Kumi Sushi, you can dine-in or order take-out, but the best spot to enjoy your meal is right at the sushi bar where you can interact with the cooks. Jason says, "I've created a lot of the sushi rolls myself, but the poke bowls and ramen are my favorite at Kumi. When you visit Asiana, be sure to try hibachi." When asked

if a third restaurant is in their sights, the husband-and-wife team humbly answered, "We are currently preparing for a third restaurant, but everything happens according to God's plan. We are very grateful for everything we have today."





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The Syl·la·bus

Winter 2025

Literacy Services of Wisconsin Newsletter

In this issue:

- Executive Director Report
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- Spotlight on Students' Second Restaurant
- And more!

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SAVE THE DATE | THURSDAY | MAY 28

ILLUMINATING
LITERACY

Literacy Services of Wisconsin's Annual Fundraising Dinner

JAN SERR STUDIO