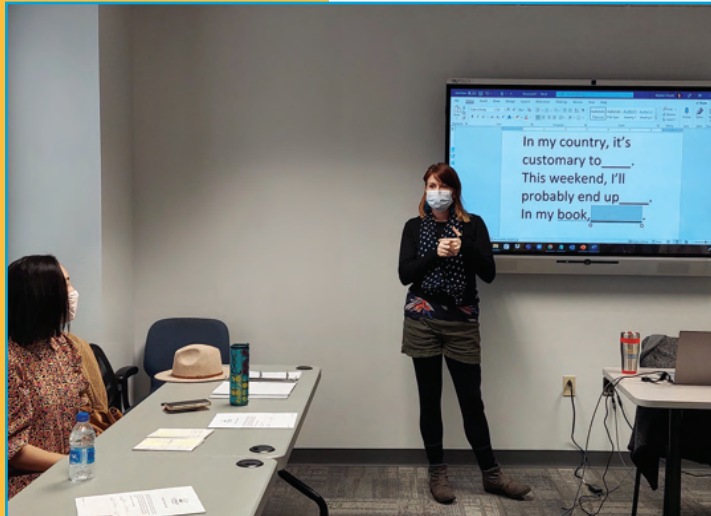


- 3 Advocacy Update
- 4 2020-21 Outcomes
- 6 Celebrate with Us
- 8 Leadership Investors
- 12 In Your Neighborhood

# The SPARK

CELEBRATING  
SUCCESSSES  
SPARKED BY YOU!



Technology remains central to learning even as in-person classes resume. Instructor Meghan Oswalt uses new smartboard technology in her English Language Learning class thanks to a grant from the BNY Mellon Foundation. Technology will allow us to offer a blended learning model, maximizing flexibility for students.

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Thanks to you, Literacy Pittsburgh continues to grow, evolve, and thrive.

You've heard us say that our students are those who have been left behind, those who just arrived, and, most of all, those who never give up. Serving people with this kind of tenacity and grit requires us to show tenacity and grit as an organization as well.

Thanks to the generosity of local individuals and corporations, Literacy Pittsburgh not only survived year two of the pandemic, we thrived. With determination and vision, we grew and evolved to help our tenacious students, the Pittsburgh region, and employers meet the challenges of the moment. We are pleased to share a few of the accomplishments you made possible over the past year.

Continued on page 2 >>

## SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS: JEREMY

Embarking on  
an exciting new  
career, thanks to  
you.

Bidwell Training Center referred Jeremy to Literacy Pittsburgh because he needed to increase his math score on the entrance exam.

When Literacy Pittsburgh program coordinator Leah Patterson reached out to explain our four-week math brush-up class, Jeremy immediately said, "Sign me up!"

Jeremy and his classmates met with College and Career

Readiness Instructor Emily Laughlin two days a week.

"Emily helped me remember some things and put others in a new perspective I hadn't considered before," Jeremy explains. "She helped me get over a little of my mathematical trepidation. I'm certainly over it now."

Jeremy successfully repeated the entrance test and was accepted into Bidwell's chemical



laboratory technician program. While Jeremy had many interests, he chose this program because he didn't think he would get

Continued on page 3 >>

## YEAR IN REVIEW

Continued from page 1

**Digital learning expanded** with the addition of two digital skills instructors who teach at sites across Allegheny and

childhood education. Students boost their basic skills, attain meaningful credentials, and embark on a career path that pays a family-sustaining wage. Developing relationships with

Jewish Family and Community Services are informing the integration of career services into our core programming. We look forward to sharing the progress of those efforts throughout 2022.

Deasy, and others. These grants, along with investments from The Heinz Endowments, the Hillman Foundation, and The Pittsburgh Foundation, supported these expansions to our career development programming.

**Literacy Pittsburgh's staff grew, changed, and diversified**

throughout 2021. Staff positions were added to meet our strategic goals. While we were not immune to the great resignation, we have been fortunate to attract talented new

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**Career development partnerships offer students the ability to transition seamlessly into the high-demand fields of construction, health care, and early childhood education.**

---

Beaver counties. Thanks to a pro-bono consulting project with BNY Mellon, we developed a technology strategy for staff and students that includes fully equipping all classrooms with student computers and smartboards to offer cutting-edge learning and hybrid instruction flexibility. Thanks to support from the Jefferson Regional Foundation, we continue to loan equipment to students to study remotely.

**Career development partnerships** offer students the ability to transition seamlessly into the high-demand fields of construction, healthcare and early

additional partners will be a focus for 2022.

**We helped local employers boost retention, recruitment, and advancement** for their staff through our contract-based Employee Training Services program. Employers such as UPMC, United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania, and Jefferson Hospital engaged Literacy Pittsburgh to boost the basic skills of their existing workforce.

**Our Career Accelerator pilot program helped 34 adults** attain their GED diploma, build career plans, and advance into meaningful work and higher education. The lessons learned from this three-cohort pilot with

**Last year, the state awarded us Pennsylvania Job Training and Education grants** thanks to legislative champions, including Senator Jay Costa, Representative Nathalie Mihalek, Representative Dan

Continued on page 3 >>



Congratulations to Career Accelerator student and GED grad Teedra! "The Career Accelerator program was perfect for me. They never made me feel like I didn't have what it takes. They inspire. I thought that being out of school for as long as I had been I wouldn't have been able to [get my GED diploma], but I did. I feel very accomplished, happy, and grateful. Thank you." You are so welcome, Teedra! We're proud of you!

## YEAR IN REVIEW

Continued from page 2

staff with a variety of backgrounds and life experiences. We have welcomed staff members who are immigrants, who represent a variety of ethnicities and racial groups, and who have different religious beliefs. Our goal is to be a place where all students, staff, and volunteers can grow and thrive and where differences are celebrated. To solidify and organize our efforts, we launched a board and staff diversity, equity, and inclusion committee, engaged a consulting team, and began developing a DEI plan.

**We have begun safely offering more in-person services across the region.** We look forward to a return to majority in-person services as soon as possible. We are also excited to offer a blended learning model going forward that melds in-person and remote instruction.

**Continuing to grow, evolve, and thrive in the new reality is both**

**challenging and invigorating.** An ever-changing (and seemingly never-ending) pandemic creates uncertainty. And yet our students, volunteers, and staff persevere. Compliance requirements for our state contracts have become increasingly complex, requiring new ways of operating. These public contracts provide a necessary foundation for our programming, while the generosity of private funders like you allows us to offer innovative, high-quality programming.

**You are breaking down barriers and creating opportunities for people in your community.**

We thank you for supporting our accomplishments in 2021. As we begin our 40th birthday year, we look forward to celebrating with you and building upon these successes for the benefit of our students and our community. ●

## ADVOCATING FOR OUR STUDENTS

Last month, the Pennsylvania House Education Committee unanimously passed HB 1728. The Adult Education & Recovery Fund would allocate \$15 million to upskill adults for the post-COVID workforce. CEO Carey Harris was at the State Capitol for last month's vote, along with Cheryl Heister of the Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon. While there are several steps to go before this vital funding becomes a reality, we are excited by this accomplishment! You can read more about the bill and its importance to current and future students at our website: [literacypittsburgh.org/news/workforce-recovery-fund](https://literacypittsburgh.org/news/workforce-recovery-fund)



## JEREMY

Continued from page 1

bored. He also felt it is something that he is good at, making classes easier to complete. Jeremy is expected to graduate from his program in October 2022.

His advice to other students is: "Just do it! As a person with an immense amount of pride, I understand that it's hard to admit when you need help, but the first step of doing anything is to admit you have a problem and the second is to fix it."

Jeremy's family is very supportive of his education and has been pushing him to go to school for a while, but finances were a concern. Bidwell Training Center's and Literacy Pittsburgh's free programs removed that obstacle. Jeremy's fiancé is also a student at Bidwell, and they are looking forward to the future with enthusiasm and excitement.

Jeremy says, "This has meant a lot to me because it has helped me move forward with life goals, instead of just being." ●



# LITERACY PITTSBURGH FACTS & FIGURES 2020-21



## 2020-21 REVENUE

### Contributions

Corporations & Foundations	\$754,631
Individuals	\$381,024
Special Events	\$2,495
Innovation	\$350,000*
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$1,488,150</b>

### Government Grants

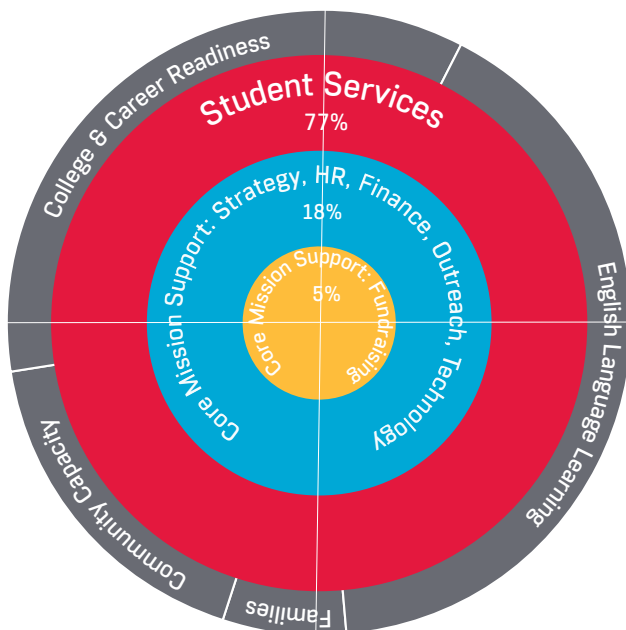
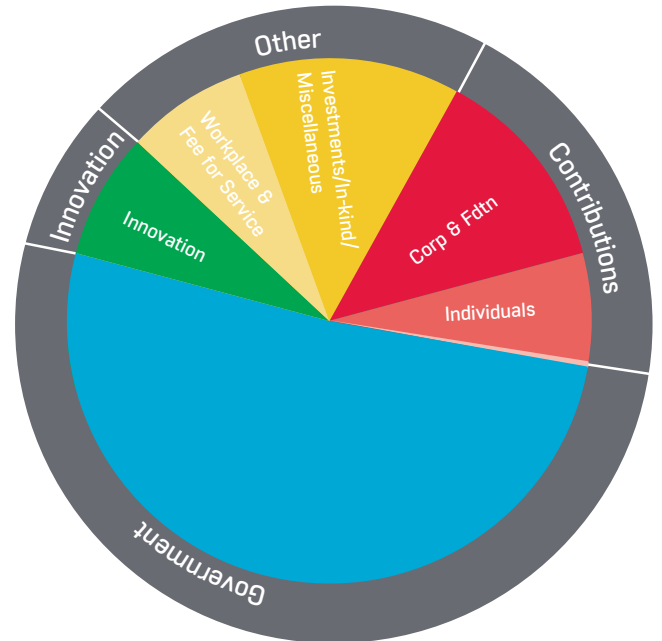
<b>Total Government</b>	<b>\$2,993,494</b>
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### Other

Workplace & Fee for Service	\$452,340
Investments/In-kind/Misc	\$778,860
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>\$1,231,200</b>

<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$5,712,844</b>
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\*Innovation revenue includes funds restricted for future years of our Ready & Relevant initiative.



## 2020-21 EXPENSES

### Student Services

College & Career Readiness	\$1,363,886
English Language Learning	\$1,172,818
Building Community Capacity	\$578,687
Family & Children	\$218,058
<b>Total Student Services</b>	<b>\$3,333,449</b>

### Core Mission Support

Management & General	\$785,937
Fundraising	\$201,456
<b>Total Core Mission Support</b>	<b>\$987,393</b>

<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$4,320,842</b>
-----------------------	--------------------

# 2020-21 PROGRAMS

## STUDENTS SERVED

### COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Reading, writing, math  
GED® diploma prep  
Career development  
Computer skills

**1,109**

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

English classes  
Citizenship prep  
Immigrant support

**924**

### CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Family literacy  
Oasis Intergenerational  
Tutoring

**153**

### BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY

Compass AmeriCorps

**2,203**

## CORE PROGRAM OUTCOMES



Employment Outcomes  
**623**



Became a U.S. Citizen  
**31**



Gained High School Equivalency  
**60**



Greater Confidence in English  
**857**



Enter Postsecondary Education  
**130**



Increased Reading/Writing/Math Skills  
**1148**



Advanced Educational Level  
**549**



Average Hours per Student  
**43**

### EMPLOYMENT UPON ENTRY

Unemployed  
**57%**

Employed  
**43%**

### EDUCATION UPON ENTRY

Less than high school diploma  
**43%**

Postsecondary  
**41%**

HS diploma  
**16%**

Note: Data includes outcomes related to a subcontract grant for adult literacy programs at Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania

# CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF BETTER LIVES THROUGH LEARNING

## CELEBRATE WITH US!

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This is a special year for Literacy Pittsburgh! We're excited to celebrate 40 years of better lives through learning. Throughout the upcoming year, we'll be hosting activities and reflecting on the people and partners who make Literacy Pittsburgh a great place to learn, volunteer, and work. The celebration includes:

- Fun birthday surprises at One Big Table: An International Tasting on March 21.
- Stories on social media about the volunteers, students, and staff members who made us who we are today.
- Custom birthday merchandise, available this spring.
- An outdoor birthday party on Sunday, August 28, our founding date.
- And more!

Thank you for making the last 40 years remarkable. We look forward to celebrating with you throughout 2022!





# LITERACY PITTSBURGH



**Monday, March 21, 2022**

**6:30 pm - 9:00 pm**

**Fairmont Pittsburgh**

Join Literacy Pittsburgh for our signature fundraising event celebrating diversity and better lives through learning. Single Tickets are \$75 per person and include food samplings from ethnic restaurants, open bar, artisan market, entertainment and activities, and 40th birthday surprises...all with a global flair. **Tickets are on sale now at [onebigtablepgh.com](http://onebigtablepgh.com)**

**Help celebrate Literacy Pittsburgh's 40th birthday! Add a Swag Bag to your reservation and take home some special gifts. One lucky Swag Bag will contain a grand prize of a Seiko Women's Tressia Diamond Two-Tone Stainless-Steel Watch valued at \$495!**

## SHARE A BIRTHDAY MESSAGE

We invite you to share a special memory or birthday message. You can either record a video or prepare a written message. Scan the QR code or type in the shortlink below. Your message may be shared in Literacy Pittsburgh's social media, website, or newsletters throughout our 40th Birthday year! We can't wait to see your memories of Literacy Pittsburgh and our students. Thank you!

### RECORD A VIDEO



<https://tinyurl.com/lpbdvideo>

### WRITE A MESSAGE



<https://tinyurl.com/lpbdform>



# 2020-21 INVESTORS

## YARDUMIAN SOCIETY

Acknowledging individuals who invested \$1,000 or more in support of our students during the 2020-21 fiscal year.

### \$10,000 +

Donald and Mary Block  
Mrs. Gibson P. Buchanan  
Hugh and Eliza Nevin  
Dr. Philip and Dr. Susan Smith

### \$5,000 – \$9,999

Anonymous  
Ms. Liz Witzke Baum  
Patti and Stan Hasselbusch  
John and Peggy O'Rourke

### \$2,500 – \$4,999

Ms. Ritchie M. Battle  
Theresa Andrews and Thomas Kondrat  
Danell R. Cooper  
Dick and Katie Heiser  
Mrs. Julia G. Kant  
Jayanne Newcaster Matthis  
Mr. and Mrs. W. Thomas McGough, Jr.  
Mr. Jared Miller  
Ms. Leslie de Runtz  
Ms. Kathleen M. Sullivan  
Mr. Sunthar Tharmalingam

### \$1,000 – \$2,499

Mr. Scott Bartlett  
Rev. Christopher and Dr. Filista Bender  
Nancy Bernstein and Robert Schoen  
Mrs. Ellie K. and Mr. Robert S. Bernstein  
Ms. Sherry Bloom and  
Mr. G. Frederic Roth  
Phil and Karen Bolden  
Lori Como  
Ms. Nancy Crouthamel  
Mr. Edward W. Denton  
Wayne and Regina Desbrow  
Ms. Kristin Engdahl  
Ms. Normandie Fulson  
Mr. Emmanuel George  
Nathaniel Gist  
Drs. Maria and Francis Guyette  
Carey Harris and Family  
Jackie Kalocay Hogg  
Karen and Daniel Johnese  
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Ms. Gianinna Mercado  
Will and Karen Martin  
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Mary Metz

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Ms. Andrea DiMartini  
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Steve Sokoloski and Derick Stalker  
John and Becky Surma  
Cate and Jerry Vockley  
Karen R. Worcester

## HERITAGE SOCIETY

Acknowledging individuals who have included Literacy Pittsburgh in their estate plans.

Donald G. Block  
Heather Chappars  
James J. Harris\*  
Stan and Patti Hasselbusch  
Louise M. Herrle  
Ellen Hildenbrand\*  
Patricia Prattis Jennings  
Virginia L. Linhart\*  
Susan B. McLaughlin  
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Elizabeth A. Smith\*  
Patricia O. Smith  
Bertha G. Suter\*  
Marty Tiani  
William J. Vodzak\*  
and Daniel M. Mathews  
Mary Yardumian\*

\*Deceased

## CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

Acknowledging cumulative investments of \$1,000 or more during the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Anonymous  
Alcoa Foundation  
Altar'd State  
Ann and Frank Cahouet Foundation  
Baierl Acura  
The Birmingham Foundation  
Paul and Dina Block Foundation  
Maxine and William Block Fund  
of the Pittsburgh Foundation  
BNY Mellon Foundation of Southwestern PA

The Burke Foundations  
Caboodle Technologies Inc.  
CINIC Chemicals America, LLC  
City of Pittsburgh  
Clapp Charitable & Educational Trust  
Clark Hunter Foundation  
The Cooper-Siegel Family Foundation  
Double Eagle Foundation  
Duolingo  
EQT Foundation  
FedEx Ground  
Gateway Health  
The Heinz Endowments  
The Hillman Foundation  
Jack Buncher Foundation  
Jefferson Regional Foundation  
Jendoco Construction Co  
Lanxess Corporation  
Laurel Foundation  
Massey Charitable Trust  
McCune Foundation  
McElhattan Foundation  
Peoples Natural Gas  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette  
Posner Foundation of Pittsburgh  
PPG Industries, Inc. Foundation  
Ryan Memorial Foundation  
Silberman Family Fund of the  
Pittsburgh Foundation  
Target  
UPS Foundation

We have made every effort to ensure that this list is complete and accurate. If we have inadvertently made an error, please call 412-393-7633 so that we may correct our records. We apologize for any omissions or errors.



## GIVING CIRCLE

**Acknowledging donors who invested up to \$999 in support of our students during the 2020-21 fiscal year.**

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Michael and Beth Abriatis  
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 Ms. Emma Thompson  
 Meghan Tighe  
 Ms. Joann L. Tissue  
 Susan Todhunter  
 Mr. William Toland  
 Ms. Julia Tomer  
 Mr. Will Tomer  
 Marla Tortorice  
 Mr. R. Conan Tuite  
 Ms. Carol Tulikangas  
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 Drew Williams  
 Mr. and Mrs. R. Kenneth Willman  
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 Izzy Zehner  
 Nancy Zhang  
 Ms. Robin E. Ziegler and Mr. Clifford Chen  
 Ms. Laura Zinski  
 Laura Zinski  
 Benjamin Zucker

# DIGITAL LITERACY CLASSES LAUNCHED

Students can boost computer skills and earn digital certificates for their resume.

The past two years have brought the need for digital literacy skills into sharp focus as educators, businesses, and nonprofit organizations alike pivoted to a fully virtual world. Nearly every worker, student, and layman has been asked to log on in a way that is unprecedented. Frontline workers—from food service to healthcare to retail—shifted their service to digital platforms where possible to limit personal contact.

For some, limited digital skills made this transition particularly daunting, if not impossible. However, learning opportunities have not kept pace with the need. Across the US, only 10% of adults who lack digital literacy skills have access to training and support, according to Digital US Coalition. Literacy Pittsburgh seeks to change that in our area.

Last year, we received a one-year grant from the PA Department of Labor and Industry to teach digital skills in Allegheny and Beaver Counties. We now offer in-person classes and open lab times for individuals in our service area. Classes are offered at Careerlink® offices downtown Pittsburgh and in the Beaver Valley Mall, at Literacy Pittsburgh's downtown center and Beaver offices, and partner sites. Some online classes are offered as well. Options include Basic Computer Skills, Basic Internet Skills, Using Email, Microsoft Word,



Brandie participated in our new computer skills classes at PA CareerLink Beaver County taught by Digital Skills Instructor Adrianna Wright. She completed and passed Microsoft Word and Internet Basics. "I learned a lot and I'm confident these skills will help me in the future," Brandie explains. Classes are offered at multiple sites in Allegheny and Beaver Counties as well as online.

Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, and more. Instructors use the nationally recognized Northstar curriculum, which allows successful participants to obtain a Northstar Digital Literacy Certificate, an important credential for employment in an increasingly digital world. ●

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# Literacy Pittsburgh in Your Neighborhood

Literacy Pittsburgh provides learning opportunities for adults and families throughout Allegheny and Beaver Counties. Students at our Downtown Center are taught in classroom settings by paid professional instructors, while hundreds of trained volunteers meet with students one-to-one or in small groups throughout our region's many neighborhoods. Because of you, your neighbors are creating better lives for themselves and their families. Read on to learn more about the history of our volunteer tutoring program and the successes happening in your neighborhood.

**Blanca and Reid** have been meeting since 2019 to help Blanca prepare for the U.S. citizenship test and pursue career goals. Blanca, took a big step toward her goal of becoming a translator when she was hired at UPMC. She looks forward to furthering her education. Blanca recently proudly shared comments from her supervisor: "Blanca is fabulous with patients and co-workers. She is a pleasure to work with. Thank you Blanca for all you are doing and we hope you continue your career with us."



Volunteers have played a vital role in the success of our students since the very beginning. In the late 1970s, one volunteer, Mary Yardumian, began teaching people to read at her Mt. Lebanon kitchen table. She reached out to others in the area to help her meet a growing need. In 1982, the year we were incorporated as a nonprofit organization, Mary and her team of volunteers served 100 students.

**Megan** is in awe at how hard all of her students work. "They have an incredible work ethic that they bring to each lesson. What is even more amazing to me is how I witness them challenge themselves and step outside their comfort zones." One student wanted to talk to her co-workers, but was scared they would not understand her. After Megan offered some encouragement, the student reported that she is having successful small talk. "I am beyond proud of her!" Megan says.



Over the years, we added new programs such as English Language Learning, GED® Preparation and Computer Skills to meet the demands of the community and employers. With each new initiative, volunteers stepped up to help students develop skills critical to succeeding as workers, parents and neighbors. Our first outreach office was established on the Northside in 1985. Today, we have eight neighborhood offices throughout Allegheny and Beaver Counties. Full-time program coordinators at these locations pair volunteers with students and support them on their journey.

**Joe** taught GED prep classes at Homewood-Brushton CCAC and Mooncrest Community programs prior to the pandemic. Since then, he has met one to one with several students. He tutors math and has helped his students prepare for the GED exam and the entrance exam for nursing school. "Tutoring gives you the chance to meet people who you wouldn't meet otherwise," Joe says. "It's rewarding to see people learn."

**Last year, 439 volunteer tutors shared 22,131 hours helping adult learners to reach their goals.**



**Israel** has developed much more confidence in his math skills, according to his tutor, Brandon. He has gained solid skills in basic multiplication, and they recently began working on division. “Israel was excited to finally understand basic division in a way that he hadn’t before,” Brandon says. Israel really enjoys the science passages in the GED prep materials, so Brandon has been introducing some with more technical language to help him improve his reading. Israel hopes to take the GED exam by the end of 2022.

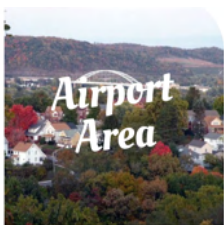
The first step to becoming a volunteer is to sign up for our introductory training, Teaching Adult Learners. This three-hour session is offered twice each month, either virtually or in-person. Volunteers then elect to teach reading and writing, math, or English Language Learning. A second virtual training session will focus on specific teaching techniques to help students meet their individual goals. Finally, tutors are assigned to a program coordinator near where they live or work. This staff member matches tutors with waiting students.

**Volunteers taught 42% of enrolled students last year, while paid teachers taught 48%. Learning outcomes are the same for both.**



**Valentina and Gwen** were matched together in January of 2021 to help Valentina improve her English skills. Gwen reports that she has made great progress and continues to gain confidence with asking questions and speaking in front of native English speakers. One benefit is that Valentina can practice at home with her daughter who has exited the ESL program at her school after just one year. Gwen is so proud of the accomplishments of both mother and daughter!

Tutors receive information about their student’s background, goals, and test scores as well as teaching materials and guidance specific to their student. Regular reports keep program coordinators informed of student goal achievement, skills addressed, and any challenges. Twice-monthly tutor talks, a monthly newsletter, an online Tutor Hub, and a twice-yearly Tutor Conference offer plenty of opportunities for tutors to boost their teaching skills. Plus, program coordinators are just a phone call or email away.



**Irene** first tutored for Literacy Pittsburgh in the 1990s, helping a young man improve his math skills so he could get a higher-paying job to save money to start his own business. She is most impressed by the drive and determination of the students. “They come to Literacy Pittsburgh because they want to do something positive for themselves and their families. I admire each and every one of them,” she says. “If education has made a positive influence in your life, and you want to pay it forward, you will be a great match for Literacy Pittsburgh!”

Literacy Pittsburgh tutors do not need to speak a foreign language or have prior teaching experience, but they are required to have a four-year degree per the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Tutors should commit to meeting with their student for at least six months to develop rapport and provide continuity. Sessions are two hours long and held twice a week in a public place or online. **Give the gift of learning in honor of Literacy Pittsburgh’s 40th birthday. Sign up today to become a tutor at [literacypittsburgh.org/volunteer](https://literacypittsburgh.org/volunteer).**

# SUPPORTING HEALTH CARE IN OUR REGION

Employer Training Services contract improved vaccine distribution.

The Employee Training Services program helps companies enhance the skills of their workers, improving retention, morale and results. Last spring, we had a unique opportunity to prepare training materials to help United Way's 211 Helpline meet the demand for COVID-19 vaccinations. Staff expansion and a new vaccine scheduling system created a need for training modules to ensure resource navigators could efficiently schedule vaccine appointments. Special Projects

Manager Nicole Johnson and Tutoring Specialist Christina Indovina developed a software user manual and training that could be conducted by United Way staff. They also created step-by-step scripts that address scenarios resource navigators will encounter.

"We could not be more impressed with or thankful for the team at Literacy Pittsburgh!" said Julie L. DeSeyn, Former Chief Program and Policy Officer, United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania. "They worked tirelessly



Wen, a native of China, became a United States citizen last year with the help of his tutor Sheryl. Wen says his children won't have to worry about him or his wife as much now that they are citizens. He is also looking forward to easier overseas travel. Congratulations, Wen!

to meet fast and changing timelines, and produced excellent materials at every step of the way."

If you are interested in learning more about how our customized Employee

Training Services courses could benefit your company, please visit the Employers section of our website or call Lori Como, Chief Program Officer, at 412-393-7640. ●

## LITERACY PITTSBURGH

### OUR MISSION

Better lives through learning.

### OUR VISION

A more inclusive and productive community driven by access to education.

### OUR VALUES

- We believe that all people deserve the opportunity to learn in a place where their strengths are celebrated.
- We respect all people and their ability to shape their own lives.
- We have a duty to earn the trust of everyone we work with.
- Our collective well-being depends on welcoming diverse cultures and perspectives.
- As a leader, we embrace the responsibility to innovate, model best practices, and grow.



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A copy of the official registration and financial information for Literacy Pittsburgh may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free, within PA, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

