

- 3 In the News
- 4 2021-22 Outcomes
- 7 Leadership Investors
- 8 In Your Neighborhood
- 13 DEIA Initiative

# The SPARK

CELEBRATING SUCCESSES SPARKED BY YOU!



Mary Leitao and Michelle Walter attended a resource fair hosted by PA CareerLink® Beaver County. Attendees learned about a variety of educational and career opportunities, including Literacy Pittsburgh's GED prep, math, and computer classes.

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

You have made many successes, highlights, and awards possible.

Our students, tutors, staff, and organization had a fantastic year because of you! In this recap article, I want to share some things happening behind the scenes that propel our organization and our students to even greater success.

During the past year, Literacy Pittsburgh experienced significant change and growth. One notable shift was an increased focus on infusing our vision of a more inclusive and productive community into our day-to-day work. This vision formed the basis of our diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) plan launched last year. In fact, this

Continued on page 2 >>

## SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS: REMMY

Setting an example for his children.

Remmy started GED preparation classes shortly before COVID hit. As a father to three children, he wanted to set an example for them and give his family a better quality of life. Unfortunately, he was unable to continue with his studies when classes moved online.

Once an evening in-person class resumed, he was there every week studying math. By March 2021, he was feeling frustrated and impatient and decided to take the Language Arts, Science

and Social Studies tests all in one day.

“What a huge confidence boost when he passed all of them!” explains his instructor Susan Mansuetti.

He continued studying math and on his 40th birthday, November 9, 2021, he took and passed the final test and earned his GED credential.

“Now as my son grows up, I can tell him, look, dad had to do this to get all this,” Remmy says. “So that was my major inspiration.”

On May 4, 2022,



Remmy completed his CDL training and passed “with flying colors.”

“I owe a lot of it to you,” Remmy said to Susan when he texted her the good news. “I just want to thank you so much. Words can’t express how much.”

# AWARDS AND RECOGNITION



Literacy Pittsburgh was named as a 2022 Bank of America Neighborhood Builder, and received a grant to support staff leadership development and DEIA initiatives at Literacy Pittsburgh. CEO Carey Harris is joined by Helene Conway Long and John Ciccolella of Bank of America.

Last year we proudly received several honors recognizing our commitment to excellence on behalf of our students. These include:

- Candid Platinum Seal of Transparency
- Best Places to Work
- Women of Influence Honoree Carey Harris
- CFO of the Year Cheryl Garcia
- Bank of America Neighborhood Builder
- Web Marketing Association's Non Profit Standard of Excellence

These accomplishments were possible because you believe in our work. Your generosity allows Literacy Pittsburgh to excel.

## YEAR IN REVIEW

Continued from page 1

DEIA plan has become a core component of our organizational strategy because it is essential to increasing our impact. Our collective well-being depends on welcoming diverse cultures and perspectives. You can read more about our new DEIA plan on page 10.

With DEIA at the center, we established three new departments to accelerate the achievement of our strategic plan goals and, in turn, our students' goals. These departments—Human Resources, Workforce

in these areas will be part of our 2023 agenda so that our collective efforts can improve the lives of our students with efficiency and effectiveness.

To ensure these initiatives create the changes we intend, we began to utilize multiple feedback loops last year. Regular pulse surveys are now conducted with staff, students, and volunteer tutors. The findings from these surveys allow agency leaders to adjust tactics and timelines to improve processes and outcomes for students, staff, and volunteers.

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**We established three new departments to accelerate the achievement of our strategic plan goals and, in turn, our students' goals.**

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Programs, and Student Services each seek to support students and staff as they work to build better lives. Six new positions were added to create these new departments. We anticipate adding at least two more positions in 2023. At present, our professional staff totals 60 talented and dedicated individuals.

This growth highlighted the need to align internal plans, goals, and operations internally. A series of staff leadership workshops focused on building, clarifying, and aligning goals while also developing the change management skills of supervisors. DEIA goals and training have also been integrated. More work

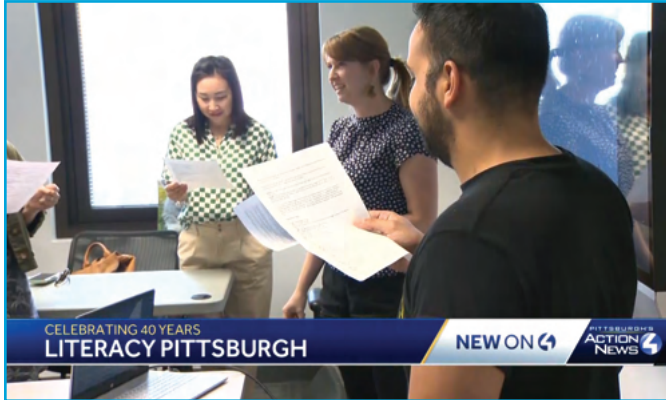
We already see that these changes are increasing our impact on the lives of those at the heart of what we do—our students, staff and volunteers. We can't wait to see what the future holds. Thank you for helping us to create better lives through learning.

With gratitude,

Carey Harris  
Chief Executive Officer

## SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS: Sarah sought to build her computer skills to obtain a new job.

She has taken classes and workshops on various topics, practiced her skills using the NorthStar online learning platform, and attended many open computer lab sessions. Sarah always asks questions and seeks different ways to do digital tasks. She also supports other students with their goals by sharing her struggles, aspirations, and successes. So far, Sarah has earned six NorthStar certificates—scoring 100% on five—and is determined to continue learning more. She recently got a job that will utilize many of her new skills!



## IN THE NEWS: 40TH BIRTHDAY

In 2022, Literacy Pittsburgh celebrated 40 years of better lives through learning. We shared photos and stories from throughout our history on social media, received birthday greetings from partners and former staff and tutors. We held a birthday bash on the day of our founding—August 28—for over 300 guests. We were especially excited to be featured in a WTAE-TV news segment that shared the journeys of three of our current students. ●

Scan the QR code to meet Dana, Remmy and Gabriela.



## CELEBRATING NEW CITIZENS

Last program year, 72 students became United States citizens giving them the right to vote, travel freely, hold elected office, apply for federal jobs, and become eligible for grants and scholarships. Most importantly, a U.S. citizen's right to remain in the United States cannot be taken away.

On Flag Day, members of the Kushkushkee Trail Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, honored these new citizens with a gift bag and America's favorite dessert—apple pie!



DAR members Sylvia Lynn and Karen Christie join Special Projects Manager Nicole Johnson, new U.S. citizens Micheline Maida and Hagar Radi, Vice Regent Marlene Becker and Regent Stacey Shaffer.

## Literacy Pittsburgh Board of Directors

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# LITERACY PITTSBURGH FACTS & FIGURES 2021-22



## 2021-22 REVENUE

### Contributions

Corporations & Foundations	\$1,112,922
Individuals	\$666,076
Special Events	\$80,020
Innovation	\$275,000*
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$2,134,018</b>

### Government Grants

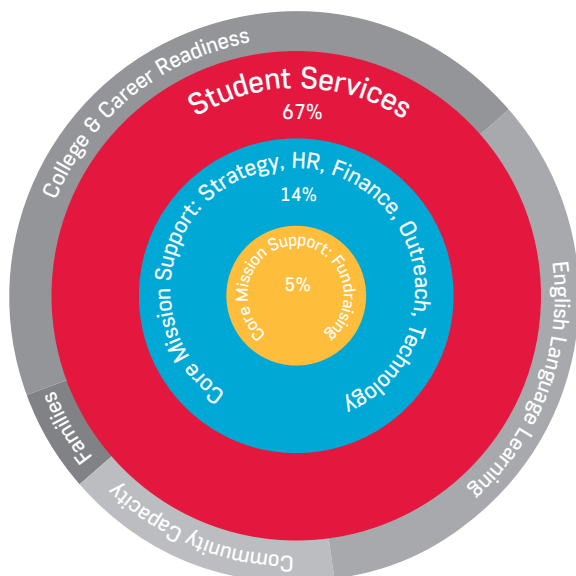
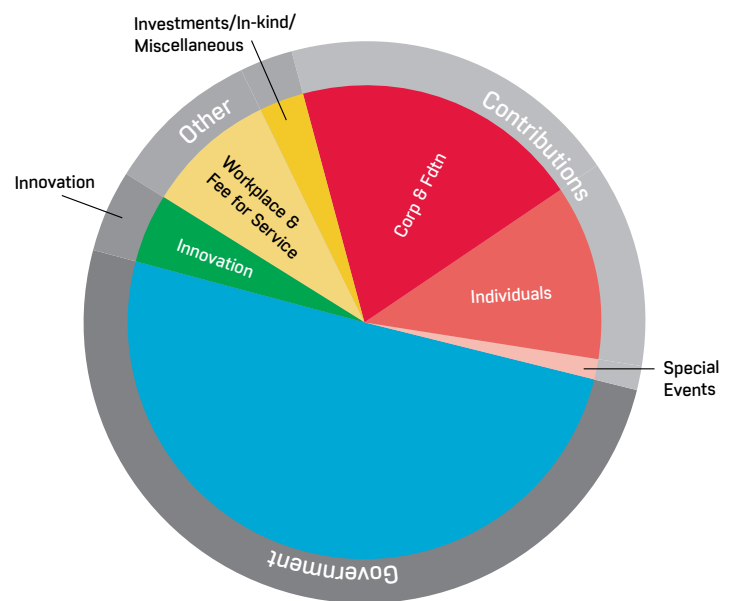
<b>Total Government</b>	<b>\$2,839,631</b>
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### Other

Workplace & Fee for Service	\$506,346
Investments/In-kind/Misc	(\$174,875)
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>\$331,471</b>

<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$5,305,120</b>
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\*Innovation revenue includes funds restricted for future years of our Ready & Relevant initiative.



## 2021-2022 EXPENSES

### Student Services

College & Career Readiness	\$1,750,207
English Language Learning	\$1,358,036
Building Community Capacity	\$622,526
Family & Children	\$225,000
<b>Total Student Services</b>	<b>\$3,995,769</b>

### Core Mission Support

Management & General	\$743,679
Fundraising	\$334,619
<b>Total Core Mission Support</b>	<b>\$1,078,298</b>

<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$5,034,067</b>
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# 2021-22 PROGRAMS

## STUDENTS SERVED

### COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Reading, writing, math  
High school equivalency diploma prep  
Workplace skills

882

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

English classes  
Citizenship prep  
Immigrant support

1,169

### CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Family literacy  
Oasis Intergenerational Tutoring

247

### BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY

Compass AmeriCorps

1,370

## CORE PROGRAM OUTCOMES



Employment Outcomes  
702



Became a U.S. Citizen  
72



Gained High School Equivalency  
38



Greater Confidence in English  
709



Enter Postsecondary Education  
86



Increased Reading/Writing/Math Skills  
713



Advanced Educational Level  
550



Average Hours per Student  
40

### EMPLOYMENT UPON ENTRY

Employed  
56%

Unemployed  
44%

### EDUCATION UPON ENTRY

Postsecondary  
46%

HS diploma  
22%

Less than high school diploma  
32%

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

**SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS:** Alex completed Terra's Math and Reading Brush Up classes and enrolled in the horticulture program at Bidwell Training Center. He plans to start his own business for landscaping and growing micro-greens. Alex says the keys to his success were: "Teachers who can explain [topics] in multiple ways, and doing work outside of class...even just five minutes helps a lot." We know that Alex's work ethic, positive attitude, and inquisitiveness will continue to serve him well in the future.



## STUDENT SERVICES REDUCES BARRIERS TO LEARNING

This new department offers career services, human services navigation, and other support.

Students often face challenges that can get in the way of their education. We recognize that to succeed at their goals, students may need help accessing services or identifying the next steps.

Our new Student Services Department seeks to fulfill our strategic plan goal of providing seamless student support through cross-sector partnerships and collaboration with other departments to ensure student success.

The Student Support Services team provides hands-on services to students, guiding them to their next steps and helping them access community assistance programs. Services currently include the Immigrant

Services and Connections (ISAC) program, mentoring, and career advising. The department is also embedding career lessons into current College and Career Readiness classes.

Student Services will build on successful collaborations such as PA Women Work New Choices, CareerLink®, Bidwell Training Center, Community College of Allegheny County, and the Jewish Family and Community Services Career Development Center.

The department hopes to not only remove barriers but to help students shift seamlessly into job training programs or college. ●

## HELPING COMPANIES INVEST IN EMPLOYEES

Employee Training Services program addresses communication challenges.

An article in *Forbes* noted that 76% of employees are more likely to stay with a company that offers continuous training opportunities. Literacy Pittsburgh offers a customized contract-based program to employers who recognize the importance of investing in employee development. Our instructors develop a curriculum based on the company's and the employees' specific need. Students are taught on-site during the workday. ●



"Now we satisfy our patients. If they ask me anything we understand now what they want," explains Sapana Adhikari, Team Leader, Environmental Services, AHN Jefferson.

Scan the QR code to learn how we helped AHN Jefferson improve staff morale and retention as well as patient satisfaction.



# 2021-22 INVESTORS

## YARDUMIAN SOCIETY

Acknowledging individuals who invested \$1,000 or more in support of our students during the 2021-22 fiscal year.

Scott and Leslie Baker  
Scott Bartlett and Joan Washington  
Ms. Ritchie M. Battle  
Rev. Christopher and Dr. Filista Bender  
Donald and Mary Block  
Ms. Sherry Bloom and  
Mr. G. Frederic Roth  
Phil & Karen Bolden  
Ms. Andrea Clark Smith and  
Mr. Demetrius Smith  
Lori Como  
Danell R. Cooper  
Ms. Nancy Crouthamel  
The Cummings Family  
Ms. Leslie de Runtz  
Ms. Kathryn Deane  
Wayne and Regina Desbrow  
Mr. Timothy Dinneen  
Mr. and Mrs. Paul S. Faller  
Ms. Ellen Freeman  
Ms. Normandie Fulson  
Mr. Emmanuel George  
Carey Harris & Family  
Patti and Stan Hasselbusch  
Dick & Katie Heiser  
Ms. Louise Herrle and  
Mr. Godfrey Molyneux  
Jackie Kalocay Hogg  
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Jayanne and Gary Matthis  
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John & Peggy O'Rourke

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Paul and Susan Smocer  
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John P. and Elizabeth L. Surma  
Cate and Jerry Vockley  
Ms. Susanne J. Wagner  
Mr. Jeff White  
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  
Susanne L. Morris\*  
P. Jerome and Cynthia K. Richey  
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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 2021-22 fiscal year.

AEO Foundation  
Alcoa Foundation  
BNY Mellon Community Partnership  
BNY Mellon Foundation of Southwestern Pennsylvania  
Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney, PC  
Caboodle Technologies Inc.  
Calvary Episcopal Church  
Charles F. Peters Foundation  
Chick Lit Book Club  
CINIC Chemicals America, LLC  
Clapp Charitable & Educational Trust  
Clark Hunter Foundation  
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Enbridge  
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Grable Foundation  
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Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield  
Howard and Nell E. Miller Foundation  
Jack Buncher Foundation  
James M. and Lucy K. Schoonmaker Foundation  
Laurel Foundation  
Massey Charitable Trust  
Maxine and William Block Fund  
McCune Foundation  
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish  
Paul and Dina Block Foundation  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette  
PNC Advisors Charitable Trust  
PNC Foundation  
Posner Foundation of Pittsburgh  
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Ryan Memorial Foundation  
Snee-Reinhardt Charitable Foundation  
The Birmingham Foundation  
The Burke Foundations  
The Cooper-Siegel Family Foundation  
The Renaissance Network, Inc.  
UPMC and UPMC Health Plan  
W.I. Patterson Charitable Fund

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 individuals who invested up to \$999 in support of our students during the 2021-22 fiscal year.

Sinan Abbas

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Mr. Frederick Rapone  
Ms. Karen Rasmussen  
Ms. Carolyn B. Reed  
Mr. Jim Reehl  
Mrs. Michelle Reese  
Ms. Cara Reinard  
Ms. Carolyn B. Reuter  
Diane Rhodes  
Cory Ricci  
Mr. Ken and Mrs. Lauren Rice  
Bennett Richardson  
Tim and Jennifer Richart  
Ms. Mary Richter  
Mona and Bob Riordan  
Shirley Robinson  
Marcus Robinson  
Robert Robinson  
Jason and Jennifer Roebach  
Ms. Anne Ronce  
Ms. Lynn Rosen  
Ms. Sandra and Mr. Gerald Rosenfeld  
Nancy and Bob Rosenthal  
The Rosinger Family  
Mr. Ronald R. Rubenfeld  
Dr. Zarky S. Rudavsky  
Ms. Lucy Russell  
Mr. and Mrs. David J. Russo  
Susan and Michael Rust  
Ms. Pamela Ryan  
Emily Sabo  
Ms. Linda Sanders  
Ms. Arlene Sanderson  
Miranda Santucci  
Ms. Lauren Saul  
Tracy Saula  
Darci Saunders  
Mr. Michael Saylor  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Schaffer  
Ms. Stephanie and Mr. Allen Schertz  
Ms. Linda Schneider  
Ms. Joanne E. Schollaert

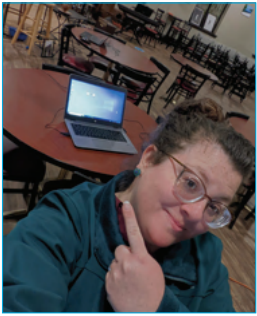
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Shannon Scotece  
Ms. Abby Seeley  
Frances Seger  
Fradell Serpe  
Hajie Sesay  
Anne Shaheen and R. Randall Tracht  
Mr. Stephen T. Shandor  
Joseph Shaughnessy  
Ms. Anne B. Shearon  
Mrs. Nancy Sheehan  
Julie Shepard and Greg Zelesnik  
Karen Shriver  
Bert and Lynn Sickler  
Rebekah Siegel & Arthur Pitt  
Marcie Silver  
Mr. Martin J. Silverman  
Ms. Julia Silverman  
Mr. Michael Sipe  
Megan Skiba  
Drs. Peter and Susan Smerd  
Susan M. Smith  
Dr. Susan Snider  
Ms. Ruth R. Snyder  
Amy Soboslay  
Ms. Barbara Anne Sodini  
William Southern  
Christine Spolar  
Sarah & Chad Stacy  
Jennifer Stark  
Holly Starling  
Ms. Judith A. Starr  
Kelly and Joseph Stasik  
Adam Stehle  
Ms. Laurel Stevens  
Heather Stewart  
Mary Stickley  
Ms. Janice P. Stock  
Ms. Alicia and Mr. Peter Stone  
Ms. Carol Sturman  
Dianne Swart  
Marcia and Louis Swartz  
Ms. Julia M. Swartzentruber  
Mrs. Megan Tague  
Mr. Angelo A. Taranto  
Anna Marie Tempero  
Mr. David Temple  
Debby Tandler  
Gabriel Tilove  
Ed Tipton  
Susan Todhunter  
Mr. and Ms. Frank Toker  
Jane Tolley  
Dr. Barbara Tomlinson  
Mr. R. Conan Tuite  
Ms. Carol Tulikangas  
Ms. Deborah Twardy  
Pedro Ugarte  
Ms. Marian Vanek  
Matt Vavro  
Mrs. Kathleen Viazanko  
Ms. Robyn Vittek  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Voinchet

Ms. Lynette Vybiral  
Mr. Robert K. Wagner  
Ms. Kelly M. Wall  
Ms. Nicole A. Walsh  
Dorothea Walter  
Erin Weber  
Amethy and Jackson Weikel-Sandstrom  
Ms. Gail L. Weisberg  
Michael and Rosemarie Welsh  
Jess and Alan Whittington  
Ms. Eileen Wickett  
Terry Wiezorek  
William Wilkins  
Tishekia Williams  
Richard Williams  
Drew Williams  
Mr. and Mrs. R. Kenneth Willman  
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Cara Wimberley  
Lorin Wisniewski  
Mr. Jake Witherell  
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Mr. and Mrs. Nevin G. Woodside, III  
Worden Public Relations  
Michael Worgul  
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Joanne A. Wright  
Kau Yang  
Mr. David F. Yardumian  
Christine Yockel  
Mr. Stanley Yorsz and  
Ms. Margaret A. McLean  
Ms. Julia Zebley  
Izzy Zehner  
Mr. Robert Zelch  
Hong Zhao  
Laura and Ron Zinski  
Dr. David Zubrow  
Ann Zucker

# LITERACY PITTSBURGH IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Literacy Pittsburgh serves Allegheny and Beaver counties with free instruction in GED preparation, math brush-up, reading, computer skills, English Language Learning, citizenship, family literacy and workplace skills. We could not create better lives through learning without the help of many partner organizations. We've highlighted a few of our partners here but there are so many more that provide space for tutor trainings, refer students to classes and tutoring, help us to recruit volunteers, and offer on-site classes. We are grateful for each and every one!

## BEAVER COUNTY–AIRPORT AREA



Digital Skills Instructor Michelle Walter welcomes students to our new classroom at **The Well/ Soma Gathering** in Beaver Falls. Since August 2022, members of the community can take free computer classes on a variety of topics

such as: navigating websites, using Microsoft programs, creating emails, searching for a job online, using Zoom, and much more.

## DOWNTOWN CENTER

Our new Student Services Department expands career exploration and planning support so that we can help more adult learners pursue their next steps. Maggie Lizzie, Career Counselor and Barrier Reduction Specialist at **Jewish Family and Community Services**, comes to our Downtown Center once each week to offer one-on-one career advising sessions. She also provides workshops in our College and Career Readiness classes on career exploration, resume writing, cover letters, effective communication, networking, job search engines, cultural orientation to the American workplace, and interview preparation.

## PITTSBURGH EAST

**Community Kitchen**, a nonprofit located in Hazelwood, offers training programs, transitional employment opportunities, apprenticeships, and job placement services to those who may have experienced barriers to employment. Literacy Pittsburgh has provided initial educational testing for several years to identify incoming participants with higher academic needs. A Literacy Pittsburgh instructor is onsite at Community Kitchen for one week each month to teach a class on kitchen math for their culinary arts program.

## NORTHSIDE–OHIO RIVER



Literacy Pittsburgh partners with **Bidwell Training Center** to provide math and reading classes to students who have taken Bidwell's academic skills assessment and need additional support to pass the exam required for their desired program. We also provide tutoring support opportunities to existing Bidwell students who need additional help in their field of study. Bidwell Training Center's programs include horticulture, pharmacy lab technician, medical billing/coding, medical assistant, chemistry lab technician, and culinary arts.

## PITTSBURGH WEST

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Literacy Pittsburgh currently holds three evening English Language Learning classes at **Carnegie Elementary School** in Carnegie for parents and community members. We serve about 30 thirty English language learners between the three

classes, representing approximately 15 countries. The classes started in September 2021 after a teacher at the school reached out to former Second Lady of PA Gisele Fetterman. Gisele connected Carnegie Elementary to Literacy Pittsburgh and the rest is history!

## JEFFERSON-MON VALLEY

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Volunteer tutor Pat Bibro reached out to Literacy Pittsburgh to launch an English class for clients of **Casa San Jose**, where she also volunteers. We support volunteer tutors from Casa San Jose by providing books, lesson plans, student testing, and, of course, ongoing advice. Our Brookline classes help learners at the beginning and intermediate levels. To date, 27 students have participated in classes at this location.

## SOUTH HILLS

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**Mt. Lebanon Public Library** has been a gracious and welcoming host to Literacy Pittsburgh tutors and students for many years. We hold a volunteer tutor training at the library annually. Student-tutor pairs and small groups regularly utilize the library's study rooms and meeting rooms for their twice-

weekly tutoring sessions. The library also hosts a volunteer-led English Conversation group once a week on Wednesday mornings.



## NORTH HILLS

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**McIntyre Elementary** serves all English Language Learning students in grades K-5 in the North Hills School District. Over the summer, the principal reached out to Literacy Pittsburgh to see if we could help parents and caregivers who were also in need of English language education. Instructor Shirley Robinson teaches a beginning-level class there on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Through this partnership, we are currently serving 22 adult learners.

## FAMILY LITERACY

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**Concord Elementary**, part of the Pittsburgh Public School System, lends Literacy Pittsburgh space one day a week to provide instruction to parents of students within the school as well as their neighbors and friends. We offer digital literacy, adult education, parenting classes and early childhood education all on site at the school.

## SQUIRREL HILL

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**La Escuelita Arcoiris** is an immersive Spanish language pre-school located in the Congregation Beth Shalom in Squirrel Hill. Literacy Pittsburgh offers English classes to their educators, helping them better communicate with parents and advance their professional development.

In addition, Literacy Pittsburgh offers the parents "Tuning into Language," a program to encourage more effective communication with their children's Spanish-speaking teachers.



Last year, **732** tutors in Allegheny and Beaver Counties provided **56,851** volunteer hours to help our students succeed. **Thank you!**



**We embrace the following definitions of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility.**

## **DIVERSITY**

Literacy Pittsburgh recognizes value in the fixed and changeable characteristics, social, familial, and economic factors that each student, staff member, and volunteer brings to the organization.

## **EQUITY**

A commitment to provide access and opportunity for all persons so that fixed and changeable characteristics, social, familial, and economic factors do not predict student educational outcomes or staff professional progress at Literacy Pittsburgh.

## **INCLUSION**

Pursuing deliberate efforts to ensure that our organization is a place where differences are embraced, different perspectives are respectfully heard, and where every individual feels a sense of belonging and inclusion.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

A commitment to supporting meaningful access to our resources by all persons who are eligible for our services, with their diverse range of needs, abilities, bodies, minds, and backgrounds. We commit to identifying and removing existing barriers and learning from the expertise of individuals who regularly face barriers to access.

# **A COMMITMENT TO BELONGING**

Through our new DEIA plan we seek to live our mission, vision, and values to create a supportive environment for all.

Increasing the impact of Literacy Pittsburgh's work depends on including and welcoming diverse perspectives and backgrounds among staff, board, volunteers, and students. We are committed to working with urgency, patience, and humility to integrate diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility into our organizational fabric. We recognize this work is not easy, nor is it quickly accomplished, but it cannot wait if we are to live our mission, vision, and values.

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**We are committed to working with urgency, patience, and humility to integrate diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility into our organizational fabric.**

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At our June 2022 board meeting we adopted a FY23 DEIA Action Plan. The plan was developed with the assistance of Demeshia Seals of DLRS Solutions and Dr. Cheryl Hall Russel of BW3. It was based on a human capital audit, cultural survey, and input from staff, board, and volunteers over a span of 15 months. The DEIA Plan is integral to Literacy Pittsburgh's overall growth strategy and has three overarching objectives. It will be managed by our DEIA Committee, comprised of board and staff, with the assistance of our DEIA Staff Engagement Committee.

- **Build or refine essential systems related to talent**—hiring, pay, potential, performance, and promotion—to protect against unconscious and conscious bias. This objective includes much of the work that our new director of human resources, Brenda Loving, will be undertaking, such as refining our recruitment, hiring, and onboarding systems, building our compensation strategy and ranges, and revising the performance management system.
- **Infuse inclusion and diversity** into Literacy Pittsburgh's strategic plan and organizational and leadership goals. DEIA goals will become part of our Year 3 strategic plan goals, and those goals will cascade into organizational and leadership goals for FY23, and the full staff in FY24.
- **Inspire, educate, and reinforce DEIA priorities** with staff, board, and volunteers as part of our strategic plan and organizational goals. This work includes an internal and external communications plan, staff training and engagement, and board and leadership training.

The work within each objective is already underway. In the months to come, Literacy Pittsburgh will engage staff, board, and others in critical projects aimed at creating a more welcoming, inclusive, diverse, and accessible environment for board, staff, volunteers, and students alike. ●

# GED CLASSES OFFERED AT BEAVER COUNTY JAIL

Students study for the exams, explore careers, and learn about supportive services.

Since 2018, Literacy Pittsburgh has provided GED preparation classes for individuals housed at the Beaver County Jail in Aliquippa, PA. The high school equivalency classes are held two days per week in a large, well-equipped classroom provided by the jail.

New students take reading and math tests to determine areas of strength and weakness so the teacher can choose an individualized study plan. Students are periodically re-tested to determine when they are ready to take the four sections of the GED exam: language arts, math, science, and social studies. If a student is released before they earn their credential, they are offered quick placement in a Literacy Pittsburgh community class so they can continue making progress toward their goal.

In addition, students explore career interests. Recent discussions have included Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC), music

recording technology, and commercial truck driving.

Finally, students are introduced to supportive services available to them when they are released from the jail. One example is a monthly reentry

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## We seek to help these students maintain stable, successful, and productive lives.

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workshop offered by Beaver County Domestic Relations, which provides information about jobs, on-the-job training, criminal record expungement, and more. Job Training for Beaver County offers job search guidance, resume workshops, and training program tuition support.

Literacy Pittsburgh and partnering agencies seek to help these students maintain stable, successful, and productive lives. ●

## DIGITAL EQUITY IN THE PITTSBURGH REGION

Schools, medical providers, and employers increasingly require digital skills.

In September, Pittsburgh Mayor Ed Gainey and County Executive Rich Fitzgerald announced the Pittsburgh Digital Equity Coalition. Literacy Pittsburgh is part of this coalition of nonprofit and government agencies charged with producing and implementing a five-year plan to close the digital divide in the region by the end of 2027.

This effort will examine Pittsburgh's unique digital access challenges, evaluate the work already being done by organizations, and outline action steps to ensure everyone has access to the necessary technology and skills to participate fully in our digital world. This plan will position the city and county to apply for federal Digital Equity Act grant dollars to make implementation a reality.

The Digital Equity Act is part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021. It includes \$2.75 billion to be awarded to states and local communities through grant programs

aimed at closing the digital divide in the United States.

Literacy Pittsburgh is proud to be part of this collaboration to provide expertise and eventually access these new funds to grow our own programming. Over the past three years, we have built a digital literacy program with the generous support of BNY Mellon, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, and most recently, Comcast and Allegheny County Department of Human Services. We have added smart boards and laptops to each of our classrooms, hired three full-time digital skills instructors, infused digital literacy into our classes, and launched standalone classes at various sites throughout Allegheny and Beaver counties that are open to the public. ●

Visit our website for a current schedule at [literacypittsburgh.org/computer-skills](https://literacypittsburgh.org/computer-skills).

# ADVOCATING FOR OUR STUDENTS

Efforts seek to increase funding for programs to help students meet educational and employment goals.

The past year has been busy as we advocate for increased resources to support our amazing students. We've had three primary advocacy efforts.

## Adult and Family Literacy Line Item:

Literacy Pittsburgh is working with the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education to advocate for a \$10 million increase for adult literacy services in an effort to recoup money lost from this line item since FY08. We met with legislators to educate them about our work, our students, and our important role in helping people become financially self-sufficient. While we were not successful for the FY23 budget, we will continue our efforts to win an increase in the Shapiro Administration's first budget.

## Adult Education and Workforce

**Development Recovery Fund:** We also worked with Representative Jim Struzzi (R-Indiana) and Senator Camera Bartolotta (R-Washington) to introduce SB766 and HB1759. These bills would provide flexible dollars for adult education providers to work with local employers and others to meet the unique needs of employers and job seekers alike. We testified at a joint hearing of the Senate Education and Labor Committees, along

with colleagues from Bidwell Corporation and the Builders Guild of Southwestern PA. The legislation did not make it to the floor for a vote in FY22, but it is being re-introduced this session, and we will continue our advocacy efforts.

## Job Training and Education

**Grants:** Literacy Pittsburgh worked with local legislative champions—Senators Jay Costa and Devlin Robinson, Representatives Nathalie Mihalek, Dan Frankel, and Dan Deasy—to secure four job training and education grants that fund our digital skills, career services, and workforce partnerships. ●



Literacy Pittsburgh and other adult education providers from across PA visited legislators in September as part of National Adult and Family Literacy Education week. CEO Carey Harris talked with Senator Jay Costa, thanking him for his longtime support of adult and family literacy.

## 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.

