



Winter 2011

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Happy New Year to you!

Project READ has seen quite a few changes during 2010 and this newsletter is loaded with information and updates you'll want to read!

First of all, Diane Brogan-Adams has moved on to a new position with the East End Community Center. Diane's passion for early childhood education has led her to a position where she'll be working with that student population and their parents. We wish her well.

We also have a few other staffing announcements.

Holly Elkins-Lopez has returned as our Education Programs & Outreach Coordinator. Holly's expertise in volunteer management and with our in-school youth tutoring program (formerly Miami Valley READS) is invaluable. She will be very busy since we've added a youth ESOL tutoring component, and have taken on the training and management of the former Miami Valley Literacy Council tutors. Holly is an ESOL instructor in her spare time.

Amanda Montel has joined Project READ as our Coalition and Helpline Assistant. She is a former Literacy* AmeriCorps Dayton member and current ESOL instructor in Kettering.

Amanda's duties range from working with students (calls & walk-ins) and registering them for classes, to keeping in constant communication with literacy programs providing referral updates and follow-up, and creating and managing our coalition database. Amanda is the first and main contact for those seeking information about literacy services within, and outside, our service area.

Allison Bishop is our Literacy* AmeriCorps service member assigned to marketing, book distribution, and community outreach. She is often seen lugging the Project READ info board to many community festivals and events! Allison is also tutoring in our youth ESOL program. Her term of service runs through July 2011.

Project READ continues to grow and expand our commitment to local literacy providers, community outreach and education, literacy advocacy, and building partnerships in the community that foster an awareness of our mission. Please read on to learn more about new projects, services provided and fundraising efforts during the last year and upcoming events.

We are truly fortunate to have the volunteer and financial support of friends like you who believe in our mission to build a community of readers. THANK YOU!

Wishing you a new year filled with joy! **Becky**

Project READ Updates

In a year when the Dayton economy continued to struggle and many non-profits experienced funding challenges, Project READ reached new heights and addressed new challenges.

During 2010, Project READ increased most of its outcomes—some to record breaking heights:

- Project READ individually matched 2,345 adult learners with free GED, reading, English language and family literacy classes during FY10—the highest amount ever recorded and 145% more than FY09.
- Literacy*AmeriCorps Dayton service members instructed 865 adults during the 2009-2010 service year, 127% more than during FY09.
- Project READ distributed more than 12,000 books during FY10, nearly twice as many as the year before.

Financially, Project READ ended FY10 in the black and even added nearly \$12,000 to its unrestricted fund balance, also known as the “rainy day fund.” Several new funders supported Project READ for the first time during FY10, including CareSource Foundation and JPMorgan Chase.

2010 also brought a number of changes to the Dayton area—some very unfortunate. On September 30, Miami Valley Literacy Council (MVLC) closed its doors after 46 years of serving the literacy needs of Dayton area adults and youth, with a special concentration on adults that read below a sixth grade level. Project READ worked in concert with other local literacy providers to link MVLC clients with other programs. Project READ agreed to continue the recruitment, training and management of volunteers serving low level adult readers and adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students that MVLC had managed for decades.

The management of adult literacy volunteers is just one new challenge that Project READ will address. A recent influx of 150 Russian-Turkish refugees to the city of Dayton caused several schools to contact Project READ with a request for ESOL tutors for students in their schools as well as their families. Project READ responded by adding a youth ESOL tutoring program to its existing youth literacy services.

In short, Project READ thrived during tough economic times due to the hard work of staff and volunteers as well as the generous support of local foundations, corporations and individuals. Thank you for making it possible for Project READ to serve adults and youth struggling with literacy issues in the Dayton area.



New & Continuing Programs

A lot has been happening with the education and volunteer tutor initiatives at Project READ. We were saddened by the news of the Miami Valley Literacy Council closing their doors after many years of providing unique literacy services to the Dayton community. Project READ recognized the wonderful volunteer tutoring service MVLC was providing to their adult learners, so we've taken on the program and will continue to grow it. To date we have been in touch with over 100 of the former MVLC tutors who have continued to work with their students through this transition. They are a dedicated and talented group of individuals and we welcome this new partnership. In January, Project READ will be training additional new volunteers to work with adult learners who are currently on a waiting list for a tutor.

Project READ is also continuing to offer youth tutoring services (formerly Miami Valley READS). Participating schools are being contacted regarding our youth service initiatives and new youth tutor trainings will be starting up again in January.

We are also very excited to announce a pilot ESOL youth tutoring initiative! The demand for youth ESOL tutoring is on the rise due to the very large immigrant population living in the Dayton area. Allison Bishop, L*AC service member at Project READ, is currently spending part of her service week as an ESOL youth tutor at Dayton's St. Anthony School. She will add St. Peter's School students (Huber Heights) to her responsibilities beginning in January.

As always, there is a great need for tutors serving adults and children in our community. We will train you and provide all that you'll need to share your love of reading with a willing learner.

So...if you have the time, or know someone who may want to tutor, please have them call
Holly Elkins-Lopez at 937-512-3877.



Literacy*AmeriCorps Dayton 2010-2011

Project READ is proud to be one of only seven literacy coalitions in the country to house and manage a Literacy*AmeriCorps (L*AC) program! We have just kicked off our 7th year as participants in this unique program of national service that focuses solely on adult literacy education. Please join us in welcoming our 2010-2011 service members! We'd like you to meet:

Allison Bishop is a first year Literacy*AmeriCorps member with Project READ. She works in the Project READ office on special events, as a marketing assistant, and book distributor. Allison is also doing some ESOL tutoring with children in Dayton area schools. She is a graduate of Ohio University with a B.A. in History.

Brandi McVety is a second year Literacy*AmeriCorps member with Project READ. She worked with the Dayton Urban League's GED program her first year and is currently serving as a tutor at Mound Street Academies. Brandi graduated from Otterbein University with a B.S. in physics and a B.A. in math.

Paige Jessee is currently serving her first year as a Literacy*AmeriCorps member at Mound Street Academies building literacy skills with young adults who are working towards their high school diplomas. Paige recently completed a Master's program at Loyola University Chicago in Cultural and Educational Policy Studies.

Rosalinda Linares is in her second year of Literacy*AmeriCorps service. She is serving with the Miami Valley Career Technology Center at St. John's United Church of Christ, the Dayton Area Chapter of the American Red Cross, and at Sinclair Community College. Rosalinda teaches ESOL classes at St. John's and the Red Cross and tutors adults in the Readiness program at Sinclair.

Allison Mikesell discovered the Literacy*AmeriCorps program here in Dayton and she thought it seemed like the perfect fit. Allison is serving at the Kettering Schools Office of Community Literacy Programs, where she splits her time between a Kid's Club classroom and adult ESOL tutoring. Allison grew up in Germantown and graduated from the University of Dayton with degrees in Spanish and English.

Amy Bushnell is serving at the Kettering Schools Office of Community Literacy Programs for her second year. Amy teaches adult ESOL and assists in an extended-day kindergarten program at JFK Elementary. The highlight of her second year, so far, has been teaching an 8-week intervention English class, with another AmeriCorps member, to lower-level reading and writing ESOL students. The outcome of this class went above and beyond expectations, passing 9 out of 10 students to the next highest class available. Amy grew up in Piqua.

Amanda Brust is a second-year Literacy*AmeriCorps member with the Kettering ABLE program. She spends most of her days doing individual tutoring with ESOL and GED students. In addition to the tutoring, Amanda co-teaches an intro to intermediate ESOL class with Amy Bushnell. She decided to spend both of her AmeriCorps years at Kettering because of the wonderful staff and students. Amanda plans to pursue a degree in clinical psychology after she completes her service with AmeriCorps.

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2010-2011 Literacy*AmeriCorps Dayton Service Members (L to R)

Dan King, Emily Burkman, Anna Duckro, Allison Mikesell, Wes Bishop, Brandi McVety, Paige Jessee, Shelby Sleight, Amy Bushnell & Allison Bishop ~ Not pictured: Amanda Brust & Rosie Linares

Emily Burkman teaches financial and computer literacy skills classes at Dayton Ohio Habitat for Humanity. She also tutors adults in reading, math, and English. This is her second term of service with Literacy*AmeriCorps Dayton. Emily served the previous year at an after-school program at the Dakota Center. Emily is a 2009 graduate of Smith College.

Shelby Sleight is a first year AmeriCorps member. She is serving with the Miami Valley Career Technology Center. Shelby's main responsibilities include tutoring students who are taking college readiness and developmental math courses. These courses are designed to get students ready for college level work. She also teaches a basic ESOL class one day per week for the St. John's ESOL program.

Wes Bishop is a returning member to Literacy*AmeriCorps. During his first year of service, he taught high school students at Webster Street Academy. This year Wes is serving at St. Mary's Center and Kettering tutoring pre-GED, ESOL and Citizenship students. Wes is a graduate of Ohio University, where he majored in history and psychology.

Dan King is a first year member with Literacy*AmeriCorps. He is from Harrodsburg, Kentucky and has lived in Ohio for the past two years. Dan serves at Kettering and St. Mary's Center and tutors both GED and ESOL students. Dan has his masters in English Literature from Ohio University.

Anna Duckro is a first year AmeriCorps member and serves with the Miami Valley Career Technology Center. Anna's main responsibilities include tutoring students who are taking MVCTC college readiness and developmental math courses on Sinclair's campus.

Recruitment for 2011-2012 L*AC members will begin in late March.
Check the website www.project-read.org for application instructions

Books, books and more books!

Project READ has been the beneficiary of some very generous and creative book drives this Fall.

Thank You to all who participated in these projects!

Service Learning and comic books... How do they connect?

Students from Wright State University and Sinclair Community College, participating in a “comic books and culture” class, have gathered comic books and graphic novel donations that Project READ will distribute to teen readers in area schools. Led by instructor Craig This, the students also researched how the use of these reading materials encourage middle school reluctant readers to pick up a book enjoy the pleasures of reading! The service learning project also included marketing and fundraising efforts that helped to raise awareness of Project READ’s mission.

Washington-Centerville Public Library Teen Advisory Board book drive



A group of Centerville area teens sponsored a book drive that not only highlighted Project READ’s work in the community, but also brought in over 500 new and nearly new books that we’ll distribute to new readers in the area. This enthusiastic group are all members of the teen advisory board at the library and serve in various ways like helping with the children’s programs, registering folks for library events and reading programs, and writing book reviews that are posted at the library.

Cross Creek Community Church book drive targets middle school students

Members of the Cross Creek Community Church chose Project READ as their partner for the annual “Work-ship” service project. Church members contributed books and numerous school supplies that were assembled into “book kits”. These kits, along with information about Project READ, were delivered to Mad River and Spinning Hills Middle Schools and will be used as incentives for the students throughout this school year.

The Greene Change for Charity Parking Meter Program Featured charity for March & April 2011 is Project READ!

Just six organizations are designated each year to receive proceeds from the parking meters and parking tickets at The Greene. Each quarter spent in a meter and each ticket paid helps fund the current two-month featured charity.

**Plan to do your spring shopping at The Greene.
Park at a meter and you’re supporting Project READ!**



Members of the Washington-Centerville Public Library Teen Advisory Board

Winter/Spring Events

March 20th

Books & Co Celebrity Poster Auction for Literacy

Get ready to bid online! March 20th is the day that you can start placing bids on author-signed posters and original artwork! All proceeds benefit Project READ and the Kettering City Schools Office of Community Literacy Programs.

Watch for details coming in February!

March & April

The Big Read

Everyone will be reading and discussing ***The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*** by Rebecca Skloot. This book tells the true story of a poor Southern tobacco farmer who worked the same land as her slave ancestors. It raises questions about bioethics, privacy, economics, race, and so much more.

Book discussion dates/times will soon be listed on The Big Read website www.bigread.org. Project READ is a partner for the Big Read project.