



LITERACY KANSAS CITY

Where learning to read changes lives



2015 IMPACT REPORT

www.literacykc.org

A Letter from our Board President

Dear Supporter,

As we move into our 30th year as a non-profit helping adults in Kansas City learn to read, let's take a look at some of the tremendous changes and advances that occurred in 2015!

The most exciting change was our transition to Ticket to Read, our new service delivery model. Based on success achieved in our GEARS program, we transformed the way we reach and teach students and, as you will read, we are achieving great results! Our goal of reaching more people, more quickly and efficiently has absolutely been realized!

We held successful fundraisers- the Spelling Bee in April, Literacy for All Luncheon in September and a new addition, Writers for Readers, in November.

We promoted a new Executive Director, Gillian Helm, whose leadership has inspired all of us.

We added new staff members including two AmeriCorps VISTAs and dozens of new volunteers who help us do dozens of tasks and projects every day.


Our dedicated and passionate Board members continue to work toward our vision: literacy for all.

But most importantly, together we have helped hundreds of our fellow citizens learn a basic but life-changing skill: how to read.

It is the stories of our students that excites all of us; a new library card, a new email address, a job promotion, reading to a child, publishing an article in a journal and so much more!

I extend a heartfelt thank you for your generous support. No matter the size of the gift or the number of hours donated, your dedication to our mission is heartwarming!

Our organization is on firm footing and the future is bright for our students at Literacy Kansas City, where learning to read changes lives!



Lynne O'Connell

President, Board of Directors

Board of Directors

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Staff

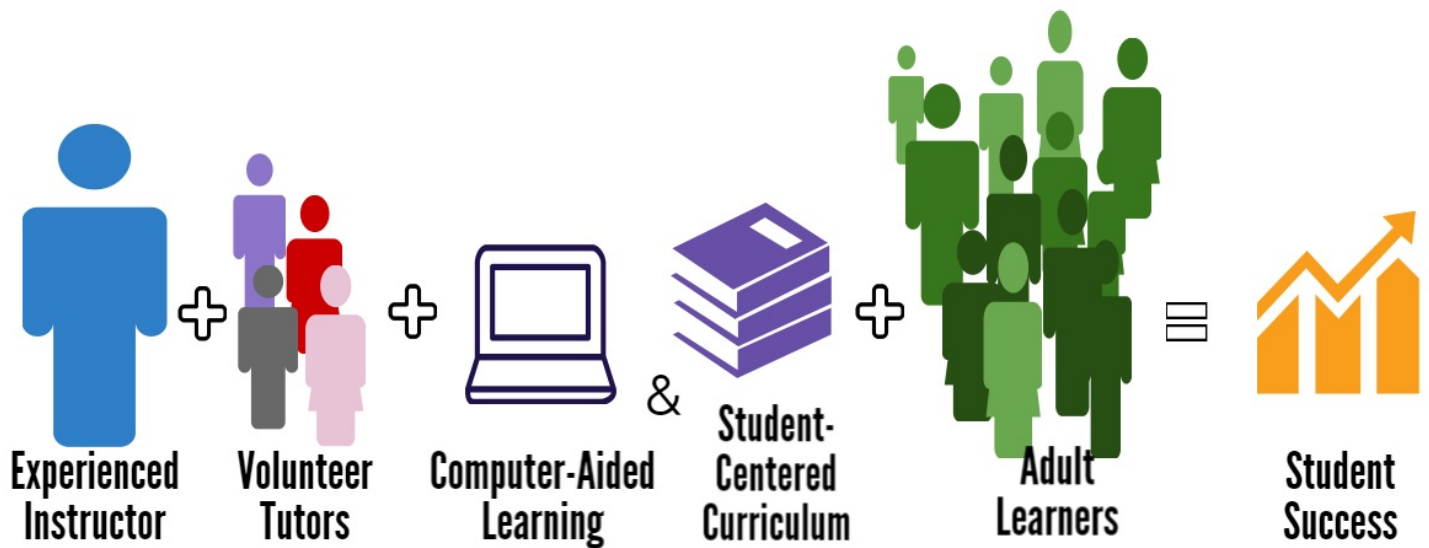
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Nancy Clay, Instructional Specialist
Julia Wendt, Instructional Team Leader
Kate Brown, Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator
Sarah Bell, Instructor and Google Fellow
Phil Denver, Instructor
Anne Gatschet, Program Development Coordinator
Lindsey Clark, Family Reading Program Coordinator (VISTA)
Will Orłowski, Ticket to Read Program Coordinator (VISTA)
Robert Day, Administrative Assistant
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Our Model



Evidence-Based Success

In 2015, Literacy Kansas City launched the Ticket to Read program. This classroom-based, instructor-led, and tutor-supported model has led to dramatic improvements in student retention, curricular quality control, and accurate tracking of student progress and participation data, which has led us to a significant conclusion.

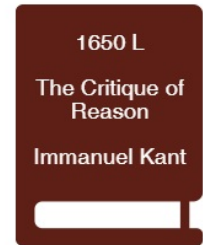
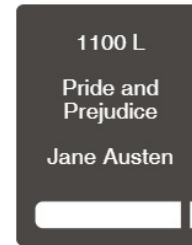
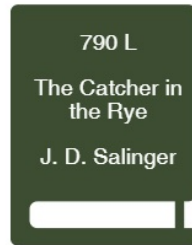
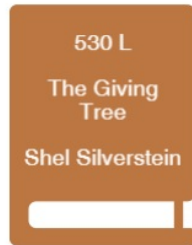
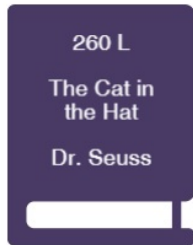
Literacy Kansas City has determined that it is essential to find valid ways to more frequently and accurately assess student progress. The TABE standardized test (Test of Adult Basic Education) is given upon enrollment and can only be valid if students are post-tested after completing sixty instructional hours, which can often take six months or more. So, we are working toward full implementation of additional evaluation instruments, including online supplemental reading programs, instructor-tracked running records, and diagnostic oral reading tests.

In order to calibrate the discrete data obtained from these varied sources, Literacy Kansas City has transitioned evaluation criteria and language from Grade Level Equivalencies (ie. "this student reads at a 3rd grade level") to Lexile measures. Lexile measures match the reader's ability to text readability, but do not presume a comparison to specific grade level interpretation. Lexile measures do not compare our adult learners to students in a test's norming group, and provide a common language across reading evaluation tools. They allow us to more precisely measure student literacy levels, ensuring more accurate course level placement and more appropriate curriculum.

For Literacy Kansas City, better data means better instruction. Better instruction and more readily available assessment information allows more frequent, inclusive communication with students regarding progress, which supports student motivation and persistence. We invite you to explore some of our earliest Ticket to Read findings in the following pages.

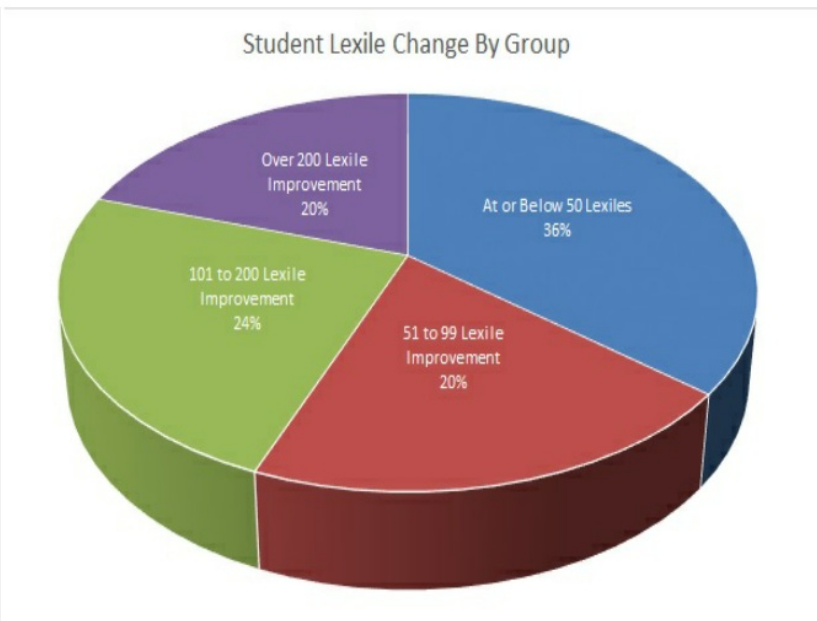
What is a Lexile?

The Lexile Framework is a scientific way to match readers with text, based on semantic difficulty and syntactic complexity. Recognized as the standard for matching readers with texts, Lexile measures connect learners of all ages with resources at the appropriate level of challenge. When a reader and text match, the reader is both sufficiently challenged and enjoys a successful reading experience. Lexile measures provide a clear way to monitor progress towards college and career readiness.



Early Ticket to Read Test Results

Students take the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) exam upon enrollment. Our goal is for the average increase in Lexile(L) levels after sixty instructional hours, approximately six months, to be 50 L. In 2015, 25 students met the criteria to return valid pre- and post-test measures. Of those, 68% showed marked progress on the TABE and 40% gained at least 100L.



Our Goal = 50 L upon post-test

Average student increase = 73 L!

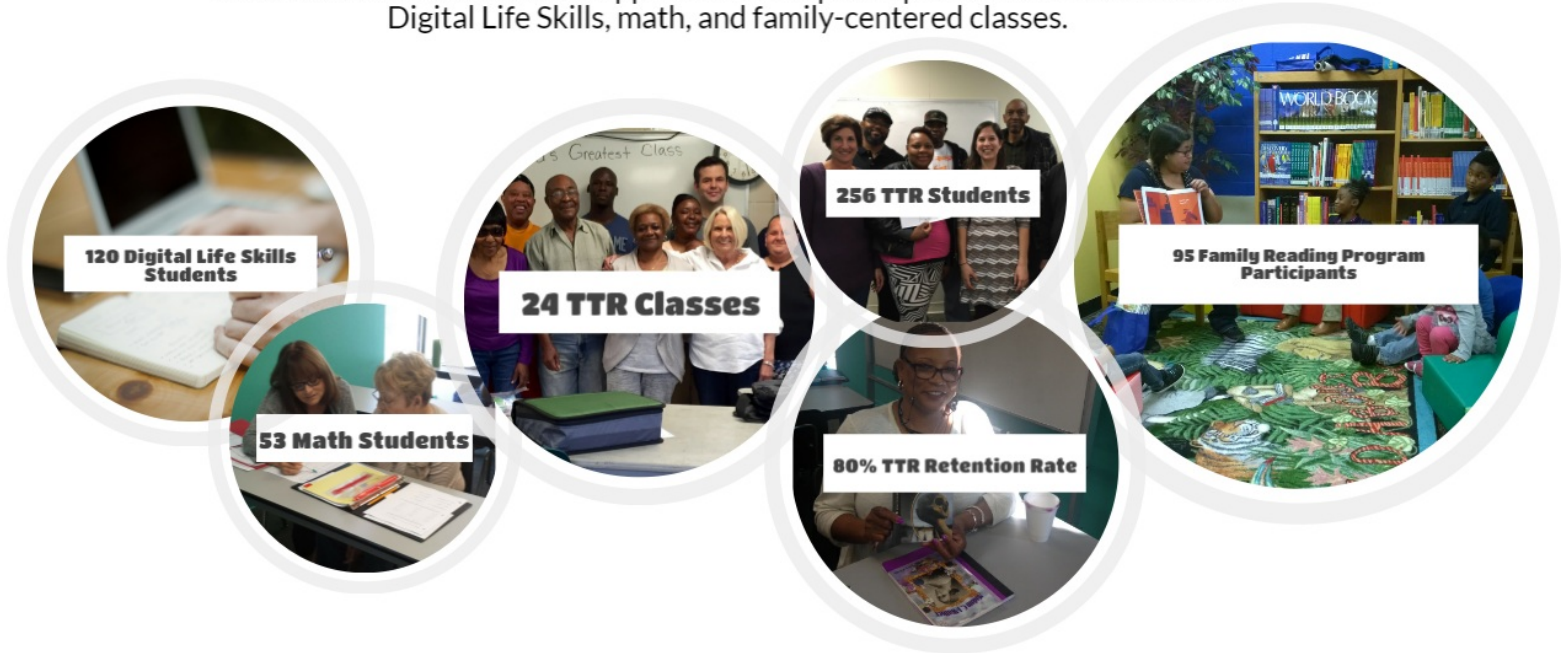
"Literacy Kansas City transforms students' lives through daily incremental gains in literacy abilities. Our success hinges on our ability to track those gains and the individualization of our instructional model. Literacy Kansas City strives to be at the forefront of nationally renowned, next-generation assessments and psycho-metrics. We have added multiple data points to more accurately assess, analyze and diagnose student needs and seek the customized educational solutions that make us a leader in adult education."

- Julia Wendt, Instructional Team Leader

Program Highlights

January 2015: Ticket to Read Program Launch

The Ticket to Read program meets students where they are, both academically and geographically. Instructor-led and tutor-supported classes meet twice weekly in partner locations throughout the metro, and focus on student-centered, personal-goal driven instruction. Digital life skills are embedded into each class and students have opportunities to participate in additional elective Digital Life Skills, math, and family-centered classes.



3, 310 Student Goals Achieved

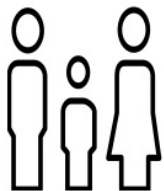
Adults learn best when their personal needs, goals, and interests drive instruction. Ticket to Read students set their goals at the beginning of each term and revisit them at mid- and end-of-term.



15 completed job training
5 placed in post-secondary education
2 obtained a high school equivalency



19 promotions
37 earned a raise
48 got a job
6 started a business



17 left public assistance
39 joined the PTA
110 read to a child



186 sent email
105 submitted online form
64 purchased their first computer/laptop

Student Success



Shirley Lewis and
VISTA Will Orlowski

"I'm not embarrassed that I'm in classes to improve my reading and writing. I'm proud. I'd be embarrassed if there was help available and I didn't take advantage of it."

How Has My Garden Grown

Shirley Lewis

How has my garden grown?
A lot more flowers and a lot less weeds. It's been an eye-opener, being able to look at the world through new eyes. Eyes with a vision, not just existing. Learning that words are my friends. I used to think that words are my enemies because every time one showed up in my garden that I couldn't read, it was just like a weed. And what do you do with weeds? Ignore them, stomp on them, or pull them out. I no longer look at them as weeds, but millions of friends that I can know and read and spell and believe that my garden of weeds no longer stand; they're replaced by every word I see. That's because I love me.

Shirley's piece was recently published in The Change Agent magazine.



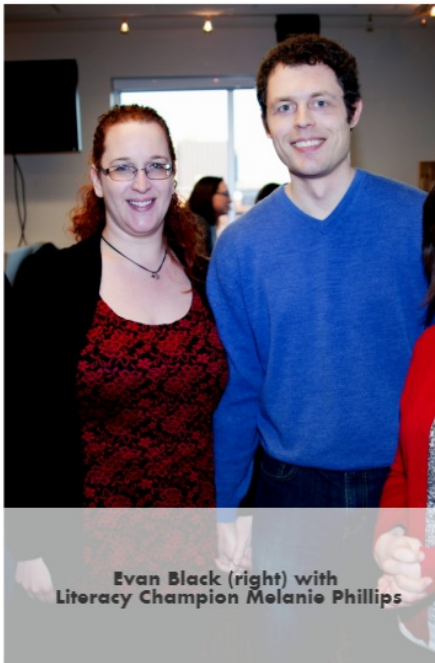
JeVan McCurdy

Twenty-nine-year-old JeVan McCurdy arrived at Literacy Kansas City the same way many of our students do: After he looked into completing his high school equivalency by taking the GED, the Smithville resident was encouraged to come to the Midtown-based nonprofit. McCurdy: "I want to be at a higher pace, at a higher skill than I am now." The polite, soft-spoken student admits he was "skeptical" at first. His educational experiences growing up were somewhat negative, and he left his sophomore year of high school. While he says he still wasn't sure about Literacy KC after his first term with the then new Ticket to Read program, he became fully engaged during his second term, when he met his current instructor, Phil Denver. "He actually showed me how to break words down and to sound them out," JeVan explains. "So it helps a lot. And he made me more confident in my writing." In fact, one of the highlights of JeVan's time with Literacy KC was when he wrote his first complete paper. "When I sat there and I realized I wrote a whole entire paper, I was like, 'Oh, wow.'" He goes on to describe what this small, yet monumental victory means to him: "Three paragraphs, properly spelled . . . It's insanely cool. It made me feel a lot better, way more confident than I have been."

He also journals nearly daily now, which he says has been "excellent." Phil encourages writing in class as well as at home, and one topic in particular is a reflection of the current steps JeVan is taking to achieve his professional ambitions. "It's called 'Lifelong Dreams,' and mine is to actually be an Iron Chef." JeVan lights up when discussing this, and it's obvious how much it means to him that he can write about it. But it's just a first step, of course. While he's currently the head chef at a sports bar and grill in Smithville, MO, he still wants to get his GED, start taking college courses and eventually accomplish his professional goals as a chef. "I want to be at a higher pace, at a higher skill than I am now," JeVan says. It's apparent that he has been inspired to do well in class, even with his long commute from north of the river. "It helps because we have an awesome teacher," JeVan says of Phil, adding, "I always want to be there with him."

Phil shares in his student's joy at his successes in class. He talks about JeVan's great leadership among the other students, and how his creativity comes through in his culinary skills. On one of the last days of summer classes, JeVan brought in a salsa he'd made. The class loved it. Phil laughs and said a student who didn't even like salsa was devouring it. But JeVan doesn't mention any of this, preferring to talk about what Phil has accomplished in the classroom. "I feel like I'm learning a lot with Phil as a teacher. So that keeps me motivated. And just seeing how much I've improved from the past two semesters to now is keeping me motivated." Again, JeVan knows these are the first steps. But with Literacy KC's committed teaching staff, volunteer tutors, and expanding resources, he'll get there.

Thank You to Our Supporters



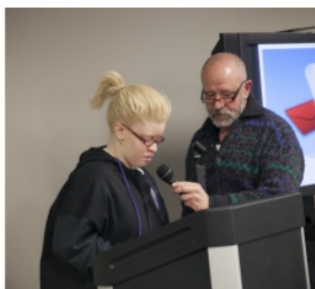
Evan Black (right) with Literacy Champion Melanie Phillips

"I donate my time and my money to Literacy Kansas City because I want to provide hope to those who need literacy skills to achieve their dreams and live their best lives possible. I want others to be able to pursue goals unhindered by uncertainty or doubt regarding their abilities to read a book, write an email, or determine how much money they have left after paying expenses. I feel proud and grateful to be able to contribute to Literacy KC, and I know that Literacy KC is grateful for my contributions."
-Evan Black



Fundraising
Events
7

2015



355
Volunteers

&

7,139
volunteer
hours

=

3.5 full-time
employees

OR
\$165,000

Our Best Year Because of You!

Institutional and Corporate Partners

American Century Foundation
Andrews McMeel Universal
Assurant
AT&T
Bank of America Foundation
Catherine G. Mathews Charitable
Fund
Country Club Bank
Curry Family Foundation
Dollar General Literacy Foundation
Greater Kansas City Community
Foundation - Digital Inclusion Fund

Hall Family Foundation
Hallmark Corporate
Foundation
Hang-Ups in KC
Happy Faces Entertainment
MMGY Global
Morgan Stanley
NTEN
O'Dell Family Foundation
Oppenstein Brothers
Foundation
Pierson Foundation

PNC Foundation
RLS Illumination Fund
State Street Foundation
Temple B'nail Jehudah
Tension Envelope Foundation
UMB Bank
United Way of Greater Kansas City
US Bank Foundation
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Foundation
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Usha Smerdon
Whitney Terrell
Duke Tufty
UMKC Honors College
Alleen Van Bebbler
James Warden
Warden Grier, LLP

Literacy Champions

Marge Bandre
Jane Beasley and Monica Mattson
Becky Bell
Helen Betts
Cherona Bicknell
Evan Black
Melissa R Curry
Dorothy Elliott
Michelle Fasel
Judith and Matt Flynn
Julee and Daren Fox
Jeanne Greenwald
Robyn Hart
Helma Hawkins
Teresa and Steve Henion
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Becky Johnston
Jennifer McCarley
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Ed Nickel
Lynne and Mark O'Connell
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Wanda Perkins
Judy Pfannenstiel
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Steven Potter
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Phyllis Schweizer
Allen Simon

Carrie Slattery
Neil and Blanche Sosland
Monica Steinle
Candice Millard Uhlig
Conrad Uhlig
Emery Uhlig
Petra Uhlig
Charles Vitale
Nancy Waldner
James and Mickey Warden
Francine Warkow and James Price
Jan Wilkinson
Darla Wolters
Linda Yeager
Gregory Zuendel

To the Board of Directors
 Literacy Kansas City
 Kansas City, Missouri

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of

LITERACY KANSAS CITY
 (a Voluntary Health and Welfare Organization)

which comprise the statements of financial position as of June 30, 2015 and 2014, and the related statements of activities, changes in net assets, functional expenses and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Literacy Kansas City as of June 30, 2015 and 2014, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.



Westwood, Kansas

December 4, 2015

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Member, American Institute CPAs | Member, Kansas Society CPAs | Member, Missouri Society CPAs | Admitted to Practice U.S. Tax Court

Sources of Revenue for Literacy Kansas City



Literacy Kansas City
Statement of Activities
1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015

30 Jun 15 30 Jun 14

Revenue		
Contracts & Consulting Income & Book Sales	\$60,791.10	\$56,763.00
Foundation Grants	\$267,298.17	\$190,335.00
Government Grants	\$0.00	\$47,601.83
Heartland Combined Fed Campaign	\$906.64	\$0.00
Individual Contributions	\$92,089.30	\$91,704.91
Corporate Contributions	\$5,746.38	\$32,794.57
United Way	\$78,902.26	\$99,665.17
Special Events	\$202,647.95	\$172,724.22
In-Kind Contributions	\$15,497.43	\$9,004.07
Misc. Income	\$70.00	\$7,823.43
Total Revenue	\$723,949.23	\$708,416.20
Gross Profit	\$723,949.23	\$708,416.20
Operating Income / (Loss)	\$723,949.23	\$708,416.20
Other Income and Expense		
Program Expenses	\$9,237.86	\$26,300.33
Salaries	\$396,752.22	\$267,645.40
Payroll Taxes	\$33,216.64	\$22,769.58
Benefits	\$37,042.53	\$15,052.03
Professional Fees	\$39,914.61	\$30,650.97
Special Events	\$36,613.54	\$37,732.27
Administrative Expenses	\$180,062.91	\$169,052.30
Total Other Income and Expense	\$732,840.31	\$569,202.88
Net Income / (Loss) before Tax	-\$8,891.08	\$139,213.32
Net Income	-\$8,891.08	\$139,213.32

Literacy Kansas City
Statement of Financial Position
June 30, 2015

30 Jun 2015 30 Jun 2014

Assets		
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	156,843.42	249,303.62
Total Current Assets	172,183.87	103,121.21
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	36,755.25	9,195.08
Total Other Non-current Assets	5,381.66	5,381.66
Total Assets	\$371,164.20	\$367,001.57
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	2,880.00	2,008.70
Line of Credit	15,000.00	15,000.00
Payroll Liabilities	39,324.86	27,142.45
Total Current Liabilities	57,204.86	44,151.15
Total Liabilities	\$57,204.86	\$44,151.15
Net Assets		
Current Year Earnings	-8,891.08	139,213.32
Temp Restricted Net Assets	222,533.00	116,689.00
Unrestricted Net Assets	100,317.42	66,948.10
Total Net Assets	\$313,959.34	\$322,850.42
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$371,164.20	\$367,001.57

Looking Ahead

Exciting things are in store for Literacy Kansas City. Strategic expansion, strengthened student services, a renewed commitment to the celebration of our supporters, a continued responsibility for evidence-based practice, and the commemoration of our 30th year of incorporation positions 2016 to be a lively and effective year.



Widening Our Reach, Increasing Our Impact

Literacy Kansas City's program design focuses on mitigating barriers to access while maximizing the time students spend in the classroom and providing relevant, applicable outcomes. We will continue to provide quality, individualized, free instruction at convenient times and locations, expanding not only the number of classes and locations, but also the type of classes and support services offered. Our strategic plan includes a more robust suite of programs that includes classes for non-native speakers and strategic alignment with agencies meeting complementary needs, steps that will take us closer to realizing our vision of Literacy for All.

Our Programs

Ticket to Read: Our core literacy program meets students where they are both academically and geographically. Instructor-led, tutor-supported classrooms throughout the metro provide research-based curriculum, student-centered instruction, and goal-oriented outcomes.

Family Reading Program: The renewed Family Reading Program, soon to be known as "Let's Read", is a multi-generational approach to addressing the inter-generational tendencies of illiteracy. Caregivers and children attend one-hour sessions at locations throughout the metro. Each lesson centers on a theme like Play, Laugh, or Sing, and at the end of the hour, each family leaves with a new reading strategy, a new book, and an increased appreciation for reading together. After ten sessions, families are encouraged to text or tweet us a "shelfie" of themselves with their new home library.

Digital Life Skills: Basic digital life skills, such as turning on a computer, operating a mouse, and opening a web browser, are embedded into our literacy programming. Additional digital life skills classes are offered at no expense to students, with subjects like Google maps, social media, internet safety, and Pinterest. As part of our digital inclusion efforts, we will also soon be opening up the use of our computer lab to the community in order to provide a no-cost opportunity for those with limited access to search for employment, learn new skills, and participate in digital-age life.

Career Online High School: In a nationally unique partnership, Literacy Kansas City has partnered with Mid-Century Public Library and Kansas City Public Library to offer Career Online High School, a fully accredited program that allows adult learners to earn a high school diploma with an attached career certificate. Students benefit from the convenience of an anytime-anywhere online learning platform and academic coaches who support them in reaching their educational and career goals. Full scholarships are available.

Represent: With a focus on the unique needs of young adults age 16-24, Represent is an intensive 12-week program that provides mentorship, a professional internship, and college readiness through a literacy-based curriculum that results in increased social capital, heightened inter- and intrapersonal awareness, and a clear academic or employment path. The inaugural Represent cohort begins classes in February 2016.

"I feel like this is going to really help me. You've saved two years of my life. I was going to have to wait for a better job before I could even try to get my GED or go back to school. My ultimate goal is to be a social worker."

Tekisha Edwards
Career Online High School Student



GET IN TOUCH WITH US



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Kansas City, MO, 64111



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