

LITERACY KC

ANNUAL  
REPORT



2019





## WELCOME TO OUR ANNUAL REPORT

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As we reflect on the past year, we are full of gratitude for the incredible support the community continues to show us through the wisdom, resources, and partnership we receive from so many, in so many different ways. With the tenacity of our students inspiring our own continued dedication to our mission, we have increased our footprint and established solid footing upon which to further build the story we are writing here at 31st and Troost through the bonds of collaboration and shared commitment to improving lives through literacy.

Thank you to our supporters, volunteers, collaborators, and partners in mission. We are motivated by your alliance and thrilled to work alongside you. Most of all, we are forever in awe and inspired by the joy, determination, and fortitude our students bring to our office and their classrooms each day. From incredible strides in learning and impressive student progress to adding additional programs and positioning ourselves for what is sure to be continued expansion and greater prosperity, this past year has been one of meeting and overcoming challenges, and aiming high and surpassing our goals.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. I think the best is yet to come.

Gillian Helm, Executive Director

# CHANGING LIVES BEYOND WORDS



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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# WELCOME TO LITERACY KC

## MISSION & VISION



**Literacy KC offers a welcoming community for adults and families to improve literacy skills and enhance quality of life. With support from volunteers, donors, partners, and the community at large, Literacy KC invests in Kansas City's greatest asset – our people.**

### Our Model

Literacy KC is revolutionizing the way adult literacy education is delivered:

**INSTRUCTOR LED:** Qualified instructors teach relevant, responsive, and level-appropriate curriculum.

**TUTOR-DRIVEN:** Trained volunteer tutors support the instructors and help meet individual student needs.

**STUDENT-CENTERED:** Each student identifies academic and personal goals and instructors design lessons to help them meet these goals.

## OUR MISSION

To advance literacy within the Kansas City metropolitan area through direct services, advocacy, and collaboration.

## TEAM MEMBERS

Gillian Helm, Executive Director  
 Kyley Ast, Instructor  
 Dianne Brewington, Instructor  
 Kate Brown, Marketing & Events Manager  
 Shavon Brown, Office Coordinator  
 Autumn Burton, Director of Programs  
 Nancy Clay, Instructional Specialist  
 Karen Coccioli, Instructional Coach  
 Amy Coffman, VISTA Program Coordinator

J.P. Deckert, Director of Development  
 Tekisha Edwards, Student Advocate  
 Marquis Hall, Instructor  
 Xavier Hankins, Development Support Specialist  
 Ina Maliqis, Instructor  
 Mary Kay Morrow, Digital Coordinator  
 Michaela Pezza, Instructor  
 Kim Rogers, Director of Operations

Rhiannon Ross, VISTA Leader  
 Samantha Sagastume, Instructor  
 Lazona Stovall, Instructor  
 ToiSheona Thomas, Programs Manager  
 Lindsay Vaughn, Volunteer Coordinator  
 Lindsey Weishar, Instructor  
 Megan York, Instructor

## OUR VISION

Literacy for all.





## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DJ Pierre, President  
Spencer Fane

Claire Bishop, Vice President  
American Public Square

Spenser Becker, Treasurer  
EPR Properties

Laura Isabel Alvarez, Secretary  
LIA Inspiration

David Voorhees, Member at Large  
Informa

Paul DeFoe  
Blue Cross & Blue Shield

Sandy Eeds  
Community Advocate

Michael Ganheart  
Euronet Worldwide

Tyjaun A. Lee, Ph.D.  
Metropolitan Community College –  
Penn Valley & Maple Woods

Kenda McMahon  
Paycom

Erin Miller  
Koehler Bortnick Team at Reece Nichols

Naz Rogers  
State Farm Insurance

Matthew Roth  
US Army Combined Arms Center

Tricia Scaglia  
Scaglia Law Firm LLC

Mike Van Booven  
BKD

# WHY LITERACY KC?

## THE LANDSCAPE



**225,000 KANSAS CITIANS READ BELOW AN EIGHTH GRADE LEVEL.**



**THROUGHOUT THEIR WORKING LIVES, HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES EARN \$1 MILLION MORE THAN NON-GRADUATES.**



**AT LITERACY KC, ADULT BASIC EDUCATION IS MORE THAN ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION. STUDENTS ARE EQUIPPED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF ALL FACETS OF THEIR LIVES - CIVIC, WORKFORCE, ACADEMIC, FAMILY, AND DIGITAL. THROUGH ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS, STUDENTS ARE EMPOWERED TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR SOCIETY IN A MORE ROBUST WAY.**



**80% OF TODAY'S JOBS REQUIRE SOME LEVEL OF DIGITAL OR COMPUTER SKILLS.**



**CHILDREN OF LOW LITERATE PARENTS HAVE A 72% CHANCE TO BECOME LOW LITERATE THEMSELVES.**



# PROGRAMS

## WHAT WE DO



CHANGING LIVES  
BEYOND WORDS.

“WHEN YOU  
HAVE THE  
WORDS, YOU  
HAVE THE  
POWER.”

-FRANCISCO, TICKET TO  
READ STUDENT





**TICKET TO READ**

The Ticket to Read program meets students where they are both academically and geographically. Instructor-led, tutor-supported classrooms throughout Kansas City provide research-based curriculum, student-centered instruction, and goal-oriented outcomes.



**CAREER ONLINE HIGH SCHOOL**

Literacy KC, along with Mid-Continent Public Library and Kansas City Public Library, offers a fully accredited program that allows adult learners to earn a high school diploma with an attached career certificate.

Students benefit from an anytime-anywhere online learning platform, and academic coaches support students in reaching their goals.



**ENTRY TO ENGLISH**

Entry to English classes help students learn to communicate fluently and effectively in English.

Using instructor-led, tutor-supported instruction, and diagnostic assessment data, students gain the fundamental skills required to master the language.



**DIGITAL LIFE SKILLS**

While basic digital life skills are embedded into our core programs, additional classes such as Google maps, social media, and internet safety are offered. Through participation, students have the chance to earn discounted devices.



**WRITERS FOR READERS**

Through a partnership with UMKC'S Masters in Creative Writing, this innovative program employs a creative writing graduate student to teach teens and adults enrolled in Literacy KC class.



**HISET PREP**

Literacy KC, in partnership with the Independence School District, offers High School Equivalency (HiSET) Preparation classes. The HiSET program prepares students to pass the HiSET or GED exam.

Sessions focus on reading, language, math, social studies, and science so students can gain skills for high school equivalency.



**LET'S READ: A FAMILY READING PROGRAM**

Let's Read is a multi-generational approach to address the inter-generational tendencies of low literacy. Built to inspire a tradition of reading in the home, Let's Read offers an action packed hour each week for caregivers and children to laugh, read, and play together.



# OUTCOMES



OUR PROGRAMS  
ARE EMPOWERING  
OUR STUDENTS TO  
CHANGE THEIR LIVES.



 **1783**  
STUDENT GOALS ACHIEVED





# OUTCOMES



**STUDENTS EARNED  
THEIR HIGH  
SCHOOL  
CREDENTIAL**



# 1 NEW

**PROGRAM LAUNCH**

HiSET Preparation Classes launched in March of 2019 in partnership with Independence School District.

**"I AM BECOMING A  
MORE COMPLETE  
ME."**

-CARMELITA, HISET & TICKET TO  
READ STUDENT



# 20284

**INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS**



# 2738

**PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS**



# 3172

**BOOKS GIVEN AWAY**

# 84 %

**TERM TO TERM RETENTION**

\*Data collected January 2019 - December 2019

# SUPPORTERS

Andrews McMeel Universal

Arvest Bank

BKD, LLC

Black & Veatch

Blue Cross Blue Shield Kansas City

Burns & McDonnell

Burns & McDonnell Foundation

Carrie J. Loose

Catherine G. Mathews Charitable Fund

Central Bank of Kansas City

City of Kansas City, MO

CommunityAmerica Credit Union

Constance M. Cooper Charitable  
Foundation

Country Club Bank

Country Club Christian Church

Dollar General Literacy Foundation

ECCO Select

EPR Properties

Euronet Worldwide

Ewing M. Kauffman Foundation

Francis Family Foundation

Google Fiber

Green Mountain Charitable Foundation

Greene Family Foundation

H&R Block

Haas & Wilkerson Insurance

Hall Family Foundation

Hallmark Corporate Foundation

Helen S. Boylan Foundation

Henderson Engineers, Inc Charitable  
Foundation

Henry & Jackie Massman Fund

Hickok Family Foundation

J.B. Reynolds Foundation

Jackson County

Johnson County Public Library

Junior League of Kansas City

Kansas City Power & Light

Kansas City Public Library

Kirk Foundation

Mader Family Foundation





# SUPPORTERS

Mariner Foundation

Marsh & McLennan Agency LLC

Mary Elizabeth Martin Scholarship

Metropolitan Community College - Penn Valley

Mid-Continent Public Library

Miller Nichols Charitable Foundation

O'Connell Family Foundation

O'Dell Family Foundation

Oppenstein Brothers Foundation

PNC Foundation

Populous

Prosperity Advisory Group

R.A. Long Foundation

Scaglia Law Firm, LLC

Sherman Family Foundation

Shumaker Family Foundation

Skillbuilders Fund

Spencer Fane LLP

Spire

Stanley H. Durwood Foundation

State Street

Strange Days Brewing

Sunderland Foundation

The Andersons, Inc.

The Sosland Foundation

United Way of Greater KC

Village Presbyterian Church

William T. Kemper Foundation

William G. McGowan Charitable Fund



# INDIVIDUAL GIVING

Claire & Denton Bishop

Evan & Melissa Black

Peter Browne & Julie Walker Browne

Holly & Chris Combest

James Cumley

Paul & Lauren DeFoe

Sandy & Susan Eeds

Dorothy Elliott

Peggy Evans

Paul & Julie Ewing

Judith & Matt Flynn

Kevin Foxworth

Michael & Cecily Ganheart

Louisa Raich Grill

Laura Haney

J. Randall Hedlund

Bill & Kay Koenigsdorf

Dennis Marker

Carrie McDonald

Kenda McMahon

Mary McNeive

Chloe Montague

Lynne & Mark O'Connell

Judy Pfannenstiel

Julie Phillips

Dennis & Palle Rilinger

Mark Schweizer

My linda & Gil Scott

Tim Sweeny

William & Pamm Threatt

David & Stefani Voorhees

Todd Voth

Wurth Family

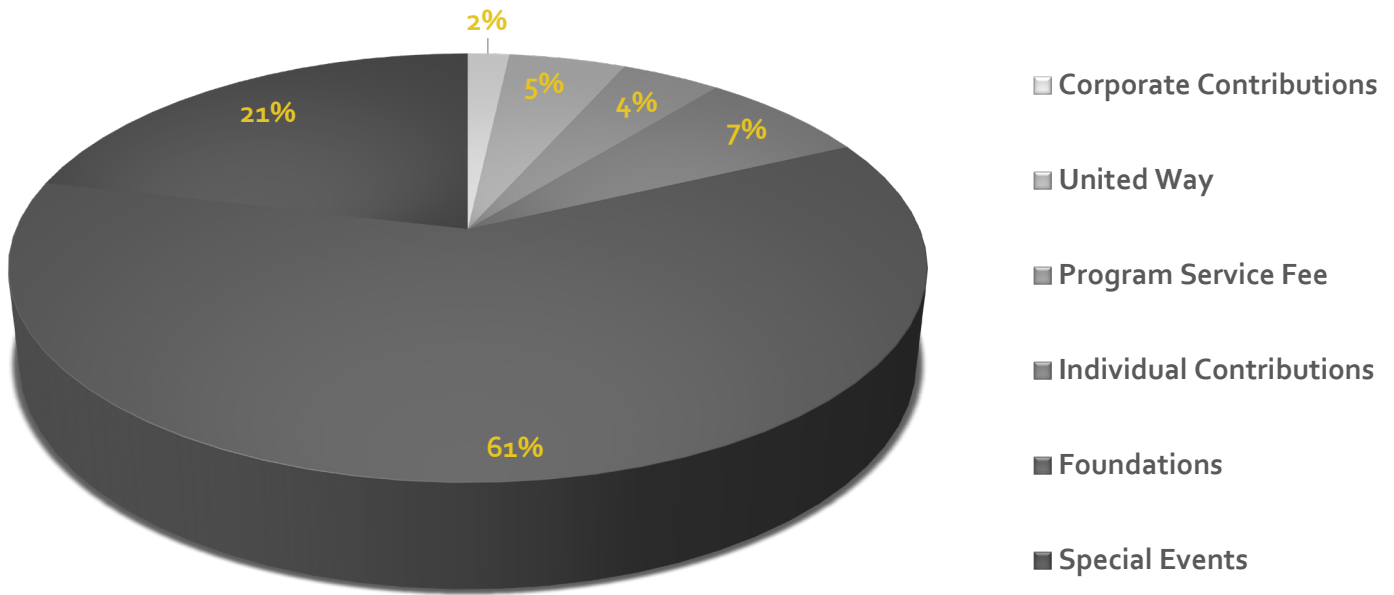
David Yeamans



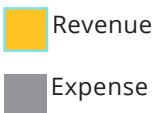
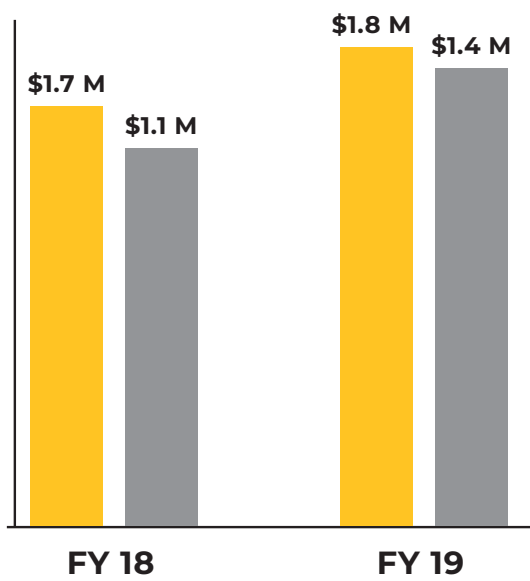


# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## REVENUE SOURCES



## REVENUE VS. EXPENSE



Award winning author and actor Taye Diggs and KC based illustrator Shane W. Evans with Executive Director Gillian Helm at Literacy KC's Let's Read family reading event.

# VOLUNTEERS

In 2019, 391 volunteers donated over 8900 hours in classrooms, at special events, or supporting special projects for an in-kind donation total of \$227,166. Below are 2019 volunteers who have donated over 100 lifetime volunteer hours.

Collin Acuff

Ronda Allee

Tom Banks

Claudia Barewin

Helen Betts

Evan Black

Don Bradley

Tom Brill

Perri Cagle

Amber Calhoun

Kellie Carroll

Moe Chizari

Richard Dalton

John DeSoto

Dean Dunham

Sandy Eeds

Dorothy Elliott

Brooke Evans

Pamela Felton

Kevin Foxworth

Lisa Garretson

Justin Graham

Alice Gutierrez

Nancy Hackett

Taylor Hamilton

Deborah Hays

Jo Heinzman

Beth Highland

Caitlin Holland

Tracy Ismert

Brooke Jacobs

Janis Jarrett

Judy Joss

Barbara Kelly

Phil Kernen

Tom Lancaster

Billi Lee

Charles Lillie

Mary Jo Longstreth

Laura Marcus Mountjoy

Jim Marshall

Carrie McDonald

Mary McNeive

Katy Morris

David Mullins

Sharlyne Narr

Michael Norris

Evelyn Otsuka-Davis

Emily Overton

William Patrick

Ann Pike

Alan Purvis

Sharon Quigley

Morgan Rehberg

Dennis Rilinger

Angela Sanders

Patricia Scott

Mylynda Scott

Emmilyn Shearman

Brandon Smith

Katlin Spoon

Larry Stice

Clara VanDraska

Charles Vitale

Wayne White

Carla Williams-English





# COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS



# AMERICORPS VISTA

The AmeriCorps VISTA program at Literacy KC addresses low literacy through traditional channels, as well as non-traditional channels that address health literacy, financial literacy, and digital literacy. Literacy KC serves as an “intermediary” organization, which assists in recruitment, training and supporting VISTA members and their host organizations.



In 2019, Literacy KC placed 25 full-time year long VISTAs and 40 Summer Associates at our participating organizations. VISTAs serve at different sub-sites or organizations to increase capacity and work on projects to assist in the eradication of poverty. A VISTA member serves for 1 year at that site and has the option to sign-up for another year. VISTAs are paid a monthly living stipend and receive an end of year one-time stipend or an educational grant, which can be used to further their education or pay off student loans.



## VISTA SUBSITES:

**BoysGrow**  
**Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas**  
**Community Capital Fund**  
**Connecting For Good**  
**Cornerstones of Care**  
**digISTORY KC**  
**Food Equality Initiative**  
**Jerusalem Farm**  
**KC Center for Inclusion**  
**KC Digital Drive**  
**KC Free Eye Clinic**  
**KC MLB Urban Youth Academy**

**KC Mothers in Charge**  
**KC Public Schools: East High School**  
**KC Public Schools: Language Services**  
**Literacy KC**  
**Made Men**  
**Mattie Rhodes Center**  
**Metropolitan Energy Center**  
**NourishKC**  
**Operation Breakthrough**  
**Reconciliation Services**  
**University of Missouri - Extension Program**  
**University of Missouri-Kansas City Propel Program**



# EVENTS

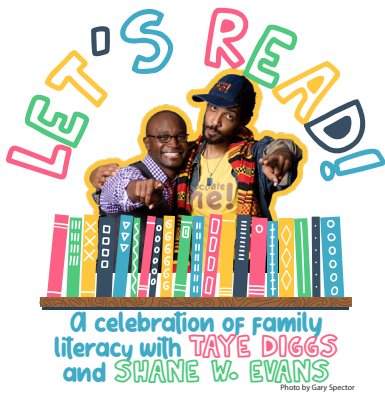
Boulevard Brewing Co. hosts an evening for Literacy KC volunteers, tutors, staff, and literacy advocates to come together and compete in a friendly trivia night. Attendees enjoy beer and wine donated by Boulevard and pizza. There is also a raffle, a series of sweet treats, and trivia lifelines that are available for purchase throughout the evening.





# EVENTS

Literacy KC welcomed award winning actor and author Taye Diggs and KC based illustrator Shane W. Evans at Let's Read: A Celebration of Family Literacy. Guests enjoyed a panel discussion, meet and greet, and story time with Taye and Shane. Dr. Mark Bedell and the Kansas City Public School District were honored as Community Partner of the Year.





# EVENTS

Each fall, our Annual Spelling Bee hosts teams from leading KC companies battling each other for the top prize. More than 350 guests enjoy the lively spelling competition plus live & silent auctions, dinner, wine, and our signature Bee Stinger cocktail. Literacy KC honored Burns & McDonnell as the 2019 Corporate Partner of the Year. Congratulations to our Spelling Bee Champions Prosperity Advisory Group!





# ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS



Literacy KC was honored to be named Burns & McDonnell's 2019 Charity of Choice. On April 27, 2019, Literacy KC hosted over 50 Burns & McDonnell employees for a volunteer day where they presented Literacy KC with a check for \$120,000.

Executive Director Gillian Helm was named Nonprofit Connect's 2019 Emerging Nonprofit Professional of the Year. Helm was honored at a ceremony in May of 2019.



Literacy KC was awarded a 2019 Nonprofit Connect Philly Award for their Annual Report.



Director of Programs Autumn Burton graduated from Central Exchange's Emerging Leaders Program.



Gillian presented a TEDx talk entitled, "Social Justice Through Literacy: Making the World a More Legible Place".



# PROFILE

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## TYRONE RHODES

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### TICKET TO READ & HISET STUDENT

Tyrone began in our HiSET program, as one of his goals is to achieve his High School Equivalency. Because of Literacy KC's offerings of Ticket to Read classes that focus on developing literacy, we were able to fit Tyrone into the TTR program to lay a foundation for his reading journey. In his TTR classes, Tyrone focuses on blending sounds into words, reading words in the context of stories, and utilizing a spelling and reading program geared toward systematic teaching of letters and their sounds.

To each class, Tyrone brings a smile and an unfailingly positive attitude. He also brings a notebook filled with words he's taught himself by writing them over and over again. His classes are geared toward creating automaticity in recognizing these words. Not only does Tyrone display tireless effort, he actually attends two classes, so that he can attend our programming Monday through Thursday. Of his classes, Tyrone says, "I'm going to come until I cross that stage."

**WRITTEN BY LINDSEY WEISHER,  
INSTRUCTOR**

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**" I'm going to come  
until I cross that  
stage."**





**LITERACY KC**



Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of the annual report. We would appreciate notification of any errors or omissions in order to correct our records. To report errors or omissions, please contact Kate Brown at [kbrown@literacykc.org](mailto:kbrown@literacykc.org).



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