



Literacy KC
Changing lives beyond words



LITERACY KC

Annual Report

2023



DEAR FRIENDS,

Literacy KC takes a community literacy approach to teaching our students, equipping instructors with a team of tutors to support the differentiated needs of each student. This approach embodies our vision of leadership: inclusive, safe, asset-based, team-oriented, and grounded in logic and results, both within the organization and in Kansas City. By leveraging our network of strategic partnerships, we deliver services in an economical way, and through exercising our expertise, we do so in an innovative social-learning model that garners impressive outcomes.

This year, over 2800 adults participated in our programs. Literacy KC students received certifications to gain life-changing employment, earned credentials that open doors toward economic opportunity, garnered the knowledge to navigate technology, the healthcare system, or to support a child in school, and grew the confidence to pursue their dreams. And it is the support we receive from this community that has made it all possible.

Thank you for joining us in changing lives beyond words.

Gillian Helm, CEO

Literacy KC

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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.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Gillian Helm, Chief Executive Officer
Kim Graves, Chief Operations Officer
Xavier Hankins, Chief Development Officer
Yolanda Waldon, Chief Workforce Officer

WHERE WE WORK

Boys & Girls Club	Literacy KC
Clymer Community Center	Mattie Rhodes Center
Grandview C-4	MCC - Longview
Hickman Mills	MCC - Penn Valley
Job Corps	Northeast Community Center
	Wayne Miner

OUR VISION

Literacy for all.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael Ganheart, President
Euronet Worldwide

Bobby Kelly
Forvis

Paul DeFoe, Vice President
UnitedHealth Group

Mike Mielke
BMO Harris Bank

Paul Ewing, Treasurer
Prosperity Advisory Group

Marquis Queen
SLCKET

Nazyrah Rogers, Secretary
State Farm Insurance

Brendan Rittel
U.S. Engineering

Bridget Richards, Member at Large
Children's Hospital Colorado Foundation

Tricia Scaglia
Scaglia Law Firm, LLC

Lynne O'Connell, Past President
Community Advocate

Dori Stayton
PNC Bank

Tamba Hali
Kansas City Chiefs Ambassador

Ann Tinsman
Community Advocate



WHY LITERACY KC?

240K

adults in the Kansas City Metropolitan area live at the lowest literacy level.

children of low-literate parents have a

72%

chance of being low-literate themselves

43%

of low-literate adults in the U.S. live in poverty

53%

of immigrants living in the U.S. are proficient English Speakers, and Kansas City has an immigrant and refugee population of roughly 150,000 people.

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.

People without a high school diploma make less than

\$800

per month on average than those who have a high school diploma

48M

adults in the U.S. cannot read, write, or do basic math above a third-grade level

75%

of state incarcerated individuals did not complete high school or can be classified as low literate



OUR PROGRAMS



HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY PREPARATION

Our High School Equivalency classes help students prepare to take the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET). These classes cover reading, language, science, math, and social sciences, all of which are subjects included in the HiSET.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

Students learn to communicate fluently and effectively in English. Using highly individualized instruction, diagnostic assessment data, tutor support, and conversation labs, students gain the fundamental skills required to master the English language.



EXCEL ADULT HIGH SCHOOL

Students have the opportunity to earn an accredited high school diploma and prepare for what comes next. Kansas City Public Library, Mid-Continent Public Library, and Literacy KC have joined together to bring this exciting program to the metro. The program is offered entirely online with 24/7 access.



DIGITAL LITERACY

We believe in the multifaceted nature of literacy, including digital literacy. Our Digital Literacy classes are open to the public who are 16+ and range in focus from learning the basics of computers to using Google applications, setting up an email, filling out online forms, and more.



FORKLIFT CERTIFICATION

After this eight week program, students will be certified in five levels of forklift and OSHA trained. The first five weeks of the course are completed online and cover safety. The remaining three weeks will cover how to operate forklifts. The student must pass the safety portion before taking the driver's exam.



CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT CERTIFICATION

During this 18 week program, students will complete the necessary pre-requisites and coursework to become certified. Once a student passes, they will receive three certifications: CNA Knowledge and Skill certification, Basic Life Support certification, and COVID certification.



SERVSAFE CERTIFICATION

ServSafe is a 10 week program and consists of two levels, basic and advanced.

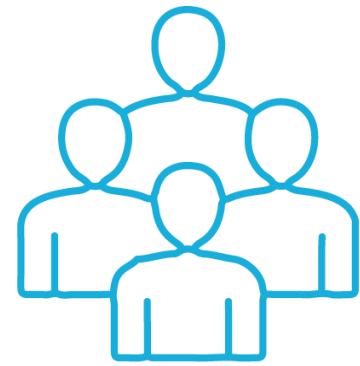
The basic level, also known as Food Handler, is for students wanting to only pass food in establishments and events (waitress, server, etc.). The advanced level is for students wanting to pursue a Restaurant Manager position.



LET'S READ FAMILY READING PROGRAM

Let's Read is a multi-generational approach to family reading. 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



2,811

Students participated in our programs



46

Students earned Workforce Credentials



1,500

Books given away in our Let's Read program



89

Students earned their High School Credentials



76%

Term to term retention



103,973

Instructional hours

OUR STUDENTS

In the heart of Kansas City, a remarkable transformation occurs annually as students from around the world become part of our Literacy KC family. With representation from more than 65 countries within our organization, our world map showcases the incredible diversity that defines us. Dive into the map, and embark on a journey that celebrates the international bonds formed through literacy and learning.



HOW MANY ARE FROM EACH COUNTRY?

1. 15	15. 9	29. 1	43. 1	57. 41
2. 4	16. 40	30. 1	44. 278	58. 3
3. 1	17. 40	31. 56	45. 2	59. 22
4. 1	18. 24	32. 66	46. 6	60. 11
5. 3	19. 2	33. 110	47. 11	61. 4
6. 1	20. 1	34. 1	48. 3	62. 2
7. 2	21. 37	35. 5	49. 3	63. 5
8. 9	22. 1	36. 5	50. 2	64. 2
9. 18	23. 3	37. 5	51. 2	65. 26
10. 2	24. 7	38. 3	52. 6	66. 410
11. 1	25. 2	39. 1	53. 4	67. 1
12. 1	26. 67	40. 1	54. 12	68. 45
13. 9	27. 3	41. 1	55. 2	69. 10
14. 12	28. 16	42. 1	56. 4	70. 1

SUPPORTERS

Arvest Bank
Blue Cross Blue Shield Kansas City
Carrie J Loose Trust
Catherine Mathews
Central Bank of Kansas City
Constance M. Cooper Charitable Foundation
Daniel G. and Wanda K. O'Dell Family Foundation
Dollar General Literacy Foundation
DRAW Architecture + urban design
EPR Properties
Euronet Worldwide
Evergy
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
FORVIS Foundation
GEICO Philanthropic Foundation
Google Fiber
Hall Family Foundation
Hallmark Cards, INC
Hart Family Fund
Health Forward Foundation
Hebenstreit Family Foundation
Henry and Jack Massman Fund
Hulston Family Foundation
J.B. Reynolds Foundation
Jean A Rosenthal Fund
J.E. Dunn Construction Co
Johnny's Tavern
Junior League of Kansas City
Kissick Construction Co., Inc.
Lee Family Charitable Giving Fund
Marion and Henry Bloch Family Foundation
Mary Elizabeth Martin Scholarship



Mazuma Credit Union
Metropolitan Community College - Penn Valley
Michael and Julie Hirons Charitable Fund
nbkc bank
O'Connell Family Foundation
Oppenstein Bros. Foundation
Pipe Fitters Local Union 533
PNC Foundation
Prosperity Shared Fund
R.A. Long Foundation
Ronald Deffenbaugh Foundation
Scharnhorst, Ast, Kennard, Griffin PC

Sherman Family Foundation
Sicket Inc
Spire
Sprint
State Street Foundation
T-Mobile
U.S. Engineering
Victor E. and Caroline E. Schutte Foundation
Village Presbyterian Church
William G. McGowan Charitable Fund

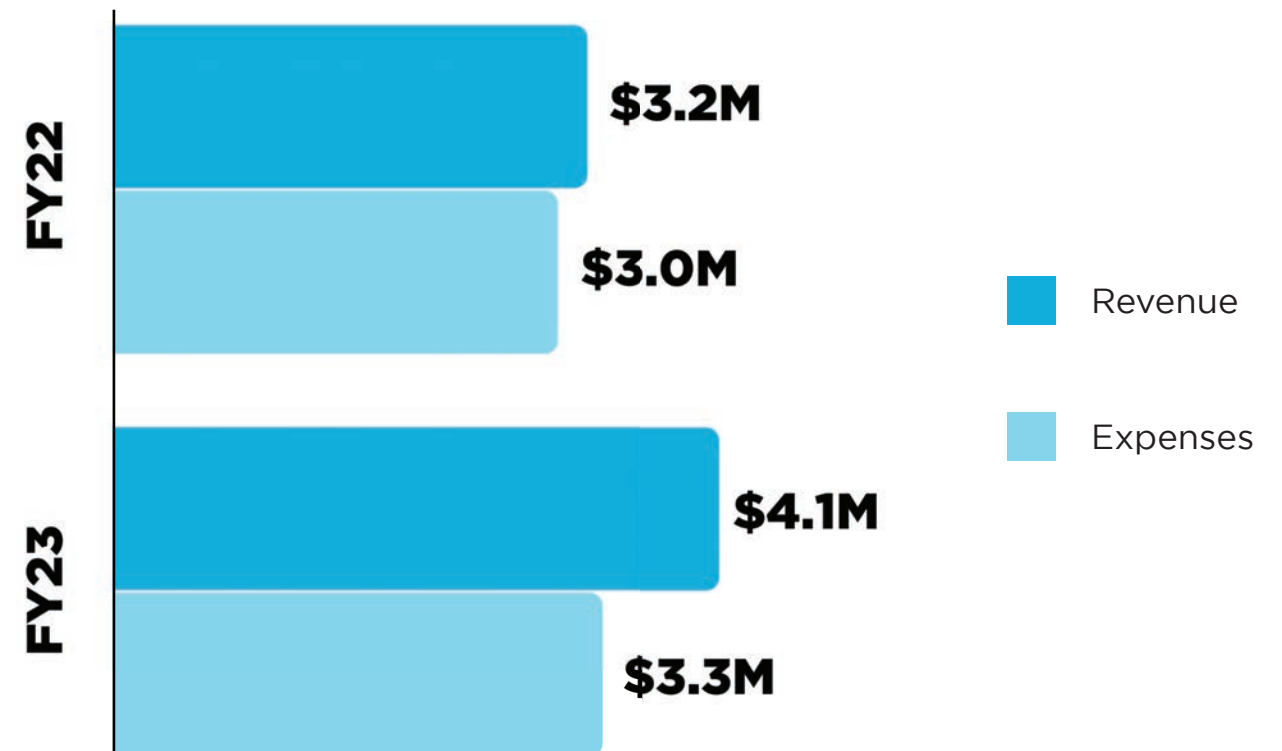
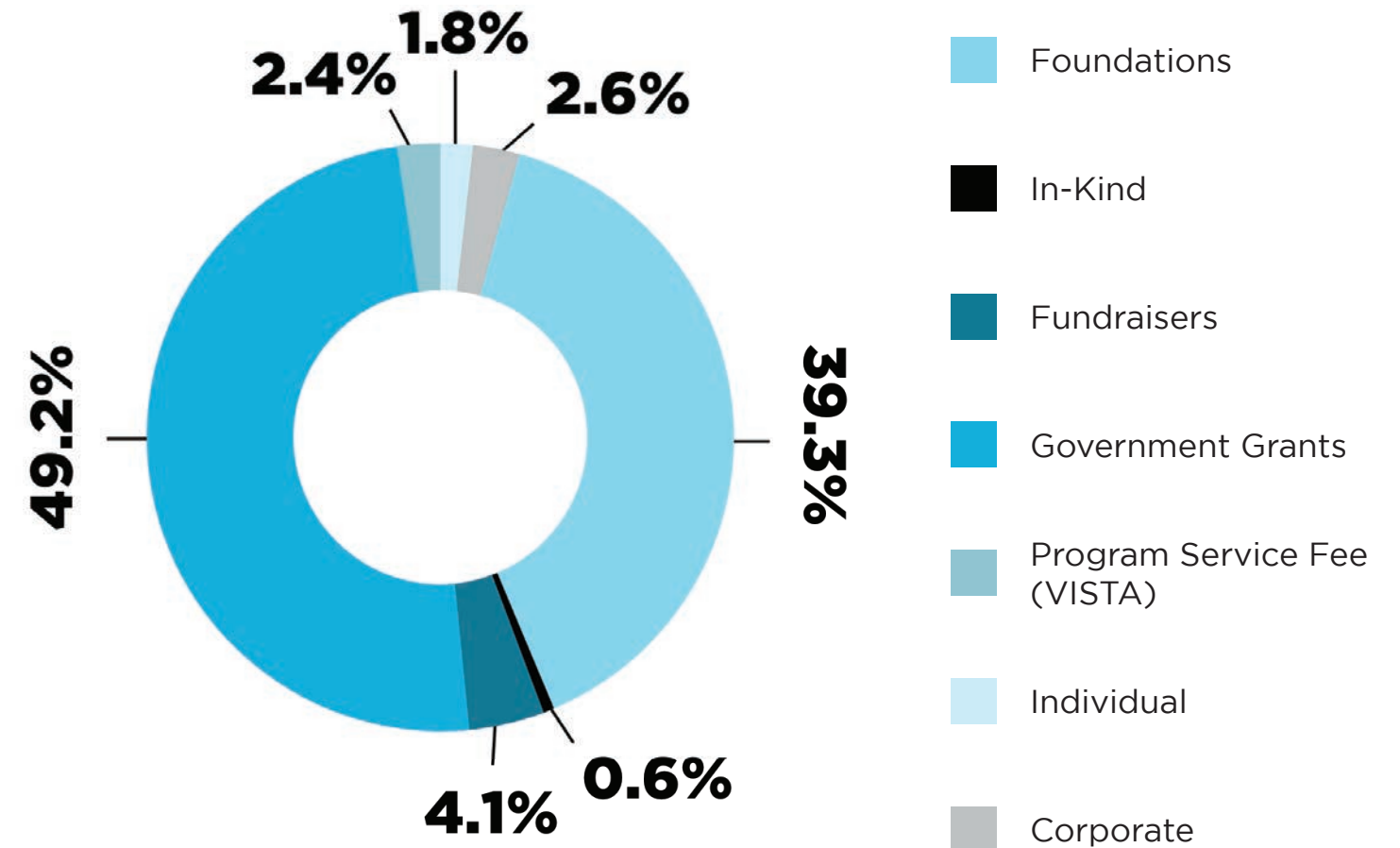
INDIVIDUAL GIVING

We are grateful for the exceptional individuals whose belief in our vision has been a catalyst for change. Their contributions have made a profound impact on our mission. We honor these top donors whose support has been instrumental in our journey toward a brighter future.

- Ann & Jim Tinsman
- Bill Koenigsdorf
- Brad Butler
- Brendan Rittel
- Bridget Richards
- Bobby Kelly
- Cam Williams
- Carrie McDonald
- Clemens Ast
- Deborah Briggs
- Dennis Rilinger
- Dorinda Stayton
- Doyle R Dreiling
- Evelyn Otsuka-Davis
- Judith & Matt Flynn
- Lauren Taylor
- Lynne & Mark O'Connell
- Marcus Nelson
- Marquis Queen
- Mary McNeive
- Michael & Cecily Ganheart
- Michel Coverdale
- Mike Mielke
- Nazyrah & Mike Rogers
- Noel Hankins
- Paul & Julie Ewing
- Paul & Lauren DeFoe
- Peggy Evans
- Tamba Hali
- Todd Voth
- Tricia Scaglia



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS



VOLUNTEERS

In the 2022-2023 school year, our dedicated volunteers and tutors contributed a remarkable 10,000 hours of their time to our organization and students. To put it in perspective, that's \$318,000; the equivalent of seven full-time staff members. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to these extraordinary individuals for their unwavering support. This list recognizes those who tutor.

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Alan Purvis | Kim Logan |
| Angela Fuentes | Larry Stice |
| Benyahmeen Ahsahyah | Laura Dickinson |
| Bill Ford | Laura M. Mountjoy |
| Bill Rogenmoser | Linda Beckring |
| Bill Taft | Lynn Schaezler |
| Carol Schmitt | Mike Hirons |
| Carol Simpkins | Morgan Rehberg |
| Charles Lillie | My linda Scott |
| Chris Tran | Pat Clement |
| Cindy Beasley | Ryan Dixon |
| David Williams | Samantha Timpe |
| Dennis Rilinger | Sandy Eeds |
| Evan Black | Spencer Sinclair |
| Evelyn Chang | Susan Ford |
| James Collier | Susan White |
| Janet Vaughan | Symie Menitove |
| Janis Jarret | Tami Coltrin |
| Jayla Johnson | Tim McClaran |
| Jo Heinzman | Tom Lancaster |
| Joe McClernon | Tom O'Donnell |
| Judy Joss | Victoria Pfau |
| Karishma Kondapalli | |



PARTNERS



AMERICORPS VISTA

At Literacy KC, our AmeriCorps VISTA program tackles low literacy from multiple angles, embracing both traditional and non-traditional avenues. We don't just stop at literacy; we also delve into health literacy, financial literacy, and digital literacy. Serving as a vital intermediary, we facilitate the recruitment, training, and support of our dedicated VISTA members and their partner organizations, strengthening the impact of our collective efforts.

VISTA Subsites:

- Art as Mentorship
- Boys Grow
- Children's Mercy Hospital
- City of Refuge
- Fox4 Love Fund for Children
- Global FC
- Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce
- Hope Builders KC
- Kanbe's Markets
- Kansas City Free Eye Clinic
- Kansas City Medical Society Foundation
- Kansas City Medicine Cabinet (AccessKC)
- Kansas City Restoration School
- Kansas City MLB Urban Youth Academy
- KC Public School District
- Language Services
- KidSight
- Literacy KC
- Mattie Rhodes
- Metro Energy Center
- Operation Breakthrough
- Reconciliation Services
- Seton Center
- Shirley's Kitchen Cabinet
- Start at Zero
- The Prospect KC
- The Transition Academy
- MU Extension
- Wildwood Outdoor Education Center



EVENTS

On May 11, 2023, Literacy KC proudly presented the 13th Annual Literacy for All Luncheon. The event featured a heartfelt conversation between former Kansas City Chiefs Linebacker Tamba Hali, and our panel of Literacy KC students. Their stories illuminated the life-changing influence of education, demonstrating the profound impact of our mission.

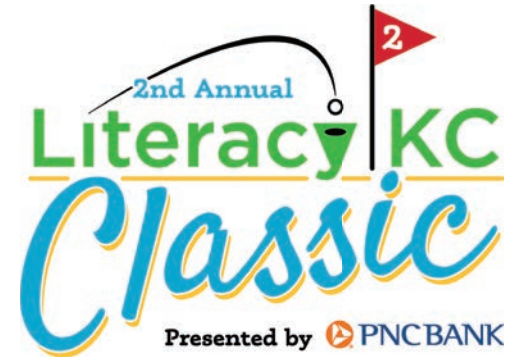


*Literacy for All Luncheon:
Discover Our World*



EVENTS

Each fall, the Literacy KC Classic hosts teams of five from leading Kansas City companies testing their skill on a custom built mini-golf course throughout KC Live! in Kansas City's Power & Light District. This year, more than 250 guests enjoyed the food & drinks, live music, silent auction, signature cocktails, and awards & prizes!



EVENTS

In December, Literacy KC hosted its annual Holiday Store, providing an opportunity for students enrolled in our programs to select gifts for their families, acquire essential winter clothing, and access household necessities as they prepare for the upcoming holiday season.

The Holiday Store



EVENTS

Last spring, Literacy KC proudly hosted the inaugural Next Steps Career Fest for our students. Featuring an impressive lineup of over 40 companies spanning technical trades, post-secondary education, and employers, this event showcased the diverse opportunities awaiting our learners. With enthusiastic participation from dozens of partners and over 100 attendees, it was a resounding success.



NEXT STEPS CAREER FEST 2023



ANTHOLOGY: VINES OF TRUTH

Vines of Truth is born from a creative writing series Literacy KC hosts each year. Which invites local writers to offer workshops with Literacy KC students to introduce them to creative writing and inspire them to pursue their own writing. The project culminates in a print and digital anthology featuring the poetry, fiction, and nonfiction of Literacy KC's adult learners.

The title, Vines of Truth, was drawn from our prime locations—our School of English on Vine St. and our main office on Troost Ave. Inspired by the efforts of Kansas City activists and community members to rename Troost Ave. as Truth Ave., we felt that Vines of Truth was a fitting title for this celebration of our students. This title also represents how, through telling their stories, our students spread their truths to readers across Kansas City.

Vines of Truth features the poetry, fiction, and nonfiction of Literacy KC's adult learners.

Visit literacykc.org to read a digital version of our anthology.



ALLEN ROBINSON

“

My heart was beating. I'm not shy or nervous one bit, but this has always been private to me. No one knows that I didn't even have [a high school diploma] and now I have to speak in a room full of people. It's like I'm being exposed, almost, but in a good way.

”

Meet Allen Robinson, a 41-year-old from Kansas City, Missouri, whose remarkable journey shines a light on resilience, determination, and the transformative power of education.

From a young age, Allen knew he was different and had big aspirations for life. However, as life unfolded, he found himself caught up in certain challenges that tested his path. Despite facing adversity and growing up in a broken home, he always had a deep connection with education.

Due to his circumstances, Allen's early years were marked by struggles and missed opportunities. He wasn't raised with his mother and had to navigate visits during school hours, which inevitably led to gaps in his education. When it came time to graduate, he found himself without enough credits to earn his diploma.

A few years later, Allen became a father, and that life-changing moment shifted his perspective. With no father figure to guide him, he realized the importance of stepping up and becoming the role model his daughter deserved. He was determined not to repeat the cycle and became the father he wished he had in his own life.

Allen's daughter, Sham'ure, became his source of inspiration and strength. He put his own dreams on hold and invested all his time and energy into ensuring her future was bright. It wasn't a flawless journey, but he was unwavering in his commitment. Thanks to his efforts, Sham'ure is currently enrolled in college to receive a degree in medical sciences.

The turning point came when Allen discovered Literacy KC, an organization that believed in him and provided the extra push he needed to reignite his educational journey. He enrolled in the program and found instant connections with the instructors, volunteers, and fellow students who saw something exceptional in him.

Fast forward to the day before graduation, and Allen had a surprise for his daughter. He had kept his educational journey a secret, not wanting to burden her with his responsibilities. Over lunch, he revealed that he was not going to college but actually earning his high school diploma and that he was graduating tomorrow. Her eyes lit up in shock, and she embraced this chapter in his life with enthusiasm.

On graduation day, Allen was asked to give a speech sharing his story. He recalls,

“My heart was beating. I'm not shy or nervous one bit, but this has always been private to me. No one knows that I didn't even have [a high school diploma] and now I have to speak in a room full of people. It's like I'm being exposed, almost, but in a good way.” Following the love and embraces he received after his speech, Allen knew he was on his next journey.

With the support of his daughter, Allen enrolled in college at Metropolitan Community College, eager to explore new horizons. He's now pursuing a degree in small business management, with aspirations to make a meaningful impact on the lives of others. His goal is to create a place that provides support, guidance, and a sense of belonging to those in need.

Allen's journey is a testament to the transformative power of education and the unwavering determination of a loving father. It's a story of second chances, personal growth, and the belief that with passion and dedication, anyone can rewrite their future.

As he embarks on this new chapter, Allen's commitment to making a positive difference is stronger than ever. He's proof that it's never too late to chase your dreams and inspire those around you.





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 Jennfer Rangel at jrangel@literacykc.org

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