



wisconsin
literacy



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health
literacy

Impact Report 2020-2021

Oh, the Places
You'll
Go!



LITERACY GREEN BAY
GED GRADUATE

this certificate is awarded to
Alma Lopez

in recognition of
GED/HSED Completion with the Children First
Family Literacy Program

Friends of Wisconsin Literacy,

“Adaptability to change is itself a hallmark of successful education.” ~ Peter Hilton

If you believe the quote above, it is fair to say that Wisconsin Literacy and its 70-member literacy agencies throughout the state have achieved a mark of excellence in adult and family education.

Some of the students served in our coalition may never have used a computer, never read print from a page, or never spoke more than a few words of English. So, you can picture the incredible feat of gaining a GED certificate, seeing their doctor in a telehealth visit, ordering anything online, taking medicine correctly or communicating in English to their work supervisor. And even more extraordinary, is that much of this learning was done in a virtual or hybrid instructional model, supported by Wisconsin Literacy.

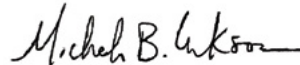
It is amazing the human potential that is released every day in local literacy agencies! **A journey that can begin with just a letter or a word, continues for a lifetime and across generations.**

Who could resist the invitation to impact people on this journey? Join us as a tutor, donor, or advocate at wisconsinliteracy.org.

Cheers to change,



Steve Mundt, Board Chair



Michele Erikson, Executive Director

Cover photo provided by Literacy Green Bay



Kenosha Literacy Council adopted face masks, outdoor programming, social distancing, and virtual options.

You Spread the Word about COVID-19 Vaccinations

Wisconsin Health Literacy (WHL) addressed COVID-19 information, misinformation and vaccination hesitancy in 32 Wisconsin counties. We conducted nine COVID-19 vaccination Train-the-Trainer (TtT) sessions and trained 232 people. The TtT program provided easy-to-read curriculum, strategies for difficult conversations, guidance on how to find local vaccine registries and locations that literacy staff and tutors shared with their communities.

Our partner literacy agencies engaged in COVID-19 vaccine outreach in unique, relevant ways to their communities. They connected community members to local vaccine clinics. They taught lessons about COVID and the vaccine through workplace literacy classes at employers, at member sites, at dairy farms, and in one-to-one tutoring sessions.

“Giving people the chance to learn and ask questions in their own workplaces, neighborhoods, and languages can have a big impact, especially using health literacy and plain language principles,” said Kristina Fullerton Rico, English-Spanish Bilingual Vaccine Outreach Coordinator at Portage County Literacy Council.

“We learned that the most significant barrier remains the attitudes and perceptions about the vaccine in the community around them,” said Stan Hudson, Health Literacy Director. “Because of this, one-on-one outreach was crucial, so people could open up and share without fear of judgement.”

WHL will expand our community outreach in digital literacy, science literacy, and health literacy thanks to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

Photo provided by the International Learning Program of Neighborhood House of Milwaukee



Upon completing the TtT, 97% of attendees reported confidence in talking about COVID vaccines.

You Helped Educate Literacy Members about Hot Jobs for Adult Learners

“Once the vaccine gets widely distributed, you will see a talent crunch,” suggested Scott Hodek, Section Chief of Department of Workforce Development, Office of Economic Advisors. He discussed economic and workforce trends during our virtual Winter Conference on February 3, 2021.

“If one of those million-dollar machines goes down and you don’t have someone to fix it, you lose a ton of productivity. It’s getting harder and harder to find people with the know how to fix those machines,” shared Scott. He pointed to truck driving, manufacturing, maintenance and repair, and registered nurses as some top “hot jobs” that have higher-than-average job openings and median wage.

“His session will help me point [adult students] into industries or areas with increased growth prospects,” said one participant.

Because of our support and professional development, one participant said they could ensure adult learners seeking high school credentials are at levels to continue in their education: “We are always looking for the best way for justice-involved individuals to gain skills in areas of need in the communities.”

Our staff connects state agencies like DWD, workforce development boards, and our partners at Wisconsin Works (W-2) agencies to our literacy agency members through professional development opportunities like this one and many others last year.



*1,500 adults gained employability skills and
682 earned their high school equivalency.*

You Improved Digital Literacy Instruction

Online education is here to stay. This educational platform allows for students to reduce their travel time (especially in rural communities) and need for childcare.

For our learners, tutors and even literacy agency staff, understanding how to use the technology could be a challenge. **We offered instructional materials, software, hardware, and training to help agencies become proficient with virtual instruction and virtual tutor trainings.**

Many agencies realized they were able to serve a new population of learners virtually. They will continue to offer virtual instruction going forward, even as they return to in-person programming. Last year, 73% of our literacy member programs had an online learning component.

“We’ve chosen to face COVID head on, remain positive, and really focus on building skills that help us through this time and will also become part of our curriculum moving forward,” shares Stacey Hartung, Outreach Coordinator of Buffalo Pepin Literacy Alliance who attended many WL professional development sessions.

They plan to weave online and in-person learning as a hybrid approach. Their online learning options gained them younger learners interested in earning their GED through a virtual learning platform.

Photo provided by the Adult Learning Center.



41 virtual trainings for 500 attendees throughout Wisconsin.

You Expanded Resources and Training for Students Statewide

You sent letters to your local state legislator requesting that they support literacy efforts statewide and shared stories of the importance of literacy skill building during the pandemic.

Senator La Tonya Johnson (District 6) said about the importance of your advocacy: “If we don’t get that input from the community or the community calling us with their issues and their problems, we don’t know that they exist.”

During last year’s Adult Education and Family Literacy Week, twelve state representatives and senators read their favorite book and discussed the importance of literacy on Wisconsin Literacy’s social media channels.

During budget discussions, Michele Erikson, Executive Director of Wisconsin Literacy and Wisconsin Health Literacy, met with these and other state representatives on the Joint Finance Committee. Michele also met with the Governor’s Office and state department leadership from the Department of Public Instruction, Department of Children and Families, Department of Workforce Development and the Department of Health Services.

Because of advocacy efforts, we will bring virtual math instruction to learners who otherwise wouldn’t have access. We will expand correctional literacy resources and our workplace literacy and employment skills activities for TANF-eligible learners, particularly refugees, next fiscal year.



\$379,334 went toward services, resources, and support to 70 literacy members and their learners statewide.

Thank You to Donors, Grant Funders and Sponsors (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021)

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For all the good work Wisconsin Literacy
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Thanks to these organizations who have partnered with us to provide health literacy services.

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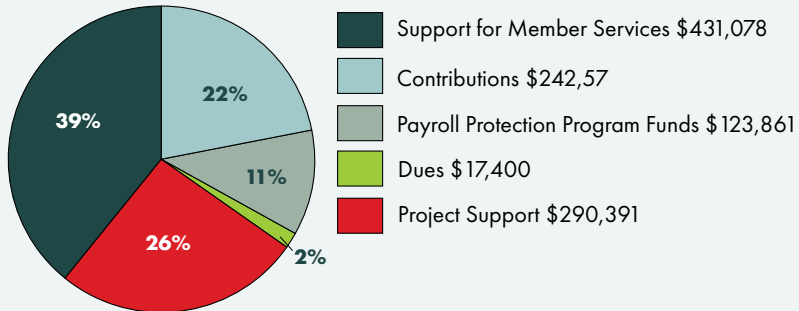
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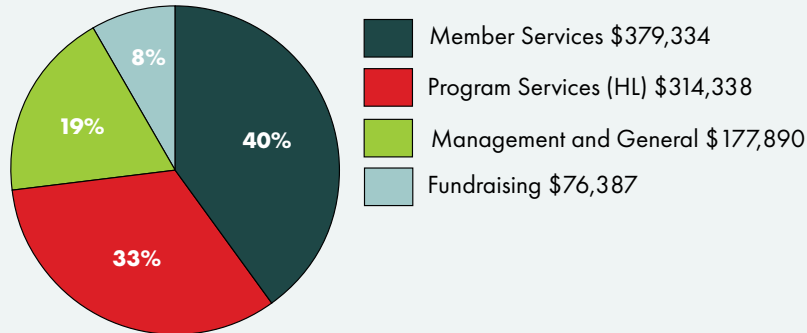
Health Literacy Partner, Jay Shrader, Vice President of Community Health, Wellness, and Health Equity at Marshfield Clinic Health System.

Financial Highlights

Revenue \$1,105,305



Expenses \$947,949



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Changing lives by strengthening literacy statewide.

Our Vision

All people in Wisconsin have the literacy skills to reach their full potential.

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