



*Impact Report*  
2018-2019

## *Friends of Wisconsin Literacy,*

*“You have begun to understand the meaning of human existence when you plant shade trees under which you know full well you will never sit.” ~ D.L. Trueblood*

Your investment plants the seeds that will impact people’s lives far into the future. Together, we build the capacity of 72 member agencies with resources and professional development, equip parents with the GED materials necessary to earn it, advocate for justice-involved individuals about the risk of opioid overdose upon reentry, and help individuals understand health information online and more easily read their prescription medication labels.

While we may never know the far-reaching impact of this work, your continued support makes it all possible. Thank you for helping us plant the trees and provide the shade for years to come.

Sincerely,

  
Bill Boyle, Board Chair

  
Michele Erikson, Executive Director

*Cover photo provided by The Literacy Council of Green County*





*Board member Jessica Doyle (left) and Regina Dunkin from Beloit Health System at the 2019 Health Literacy Summit.*

## *Advocating for Justice-Involved Individuals*

Chad was not interested in education and barely attended school past the ninth grade. While incarcerated at the Jefferson County Jail, he enrolled in education programming through the Jefferson County Literacy Council\*.

Chad earned his GED (high school equivalency diploma) after only seven weeks in the program (photo). He said, *“It has made me realize that there is more to life than the things I was doing in my past. It has given me the confidence I need to be successful.”*

Education for justice-involved individuals has a profound effect. With your support and a grant through the Department of Children and Families, we continue to provide GED study materials and test vouchers to incarcerated adults statewide who are studying for a high school credential.

Your support and a Minority Health grant from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services helped us develop programs to address the increased rise of opioid addiction for justice-involved individuals.

Formerly incarcerated individuals are 129 times more likely to overdose once released into the community. WHL (Wisconsin Health Literacy) will work with correctional facilities to implement and sustain “Let’s Talk About Opioids” workshops for justice-involved adults, focusing on how to avoid overdose from opioids.

\*All literacy programs mentioned in this report are Wisconsin Literacy members.





*Adults who participated in prison education programs cut their chances of re-incarceration in half. (“U.S. Adult Literacy Programs: Making a Difference” by ProLiteracy).*

## *Expanding to More Pharmacies*

“UW Health was really excited to participate in this project. For most patients, no matter what level of reading, if there is a lot of information on that label, it can take away from the important information [such as] how do I take this medication and take it correctly,” said Melissa Ngo, Pharmacy Manager of UW Health Community Pharmacy Services, an early adopter of the easier to read prescription label.

Thanks to your support, *almost one in five Wisconsin pharmacies, clinics, and organizations adopted easier to read prescription labels last year.* Most recently, pharmacy systems like Aurora and Mayo Clinic joined the project and improved their prescription labels.

Patrick, a community member who serves on the project’s Patient Advisory Council, said that easier to read labels are important because pharmacists “should provide people with the best service. Their life depends on it.”

Tell your local pharmacy about this project and help make Wisconsin a state where prescription labels are easy to read.





*Last year, 4 million prescriptions in Wisconsin had easier to read labels.*



## *Investing in More Resources for Adult Learners*

“I want to sincerely thank you. Without these vouchers, it would be a long, long time before I’d be able to finish the tests,” wrote a GED student from Grant County Literacy Services.

In the last three years, Wisconsin Literacy member agencies have doubled the number of TANF-eligible adults (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) receiving GED support and resources.

TANF-eligible learners face numerous barriers to continuing their education, such as childcare, transportation, and money to pay for GED exams. Jake Gorges, Learning Lab Manager from the YWCA Southeast Wisconsin, said *“This is a real impact we’re making. There is not a better investment that people can make than educating individuals that haven’t succeeded at a high school level.”*

“I’ve come a long way and I’m not looking back,” said recent HSED graduate from Literacy Services of Wisconsin. “Receiving my diploma is just a step forward towards my success and me being great.”

You supported the work of outstanding literacy programs across Wisconsin giving people a chance at success.

*Photo provided by the YWCA Southeast Wisconsin*



*88% of students surveyed found the GED/  
HSED books and study materials very  
helpful.*

## *Impacting Workplace Literacy*

Across the state, we saw a renewed interest in workplace literacy programming. For example, Paula, Human Resources and Payroll Manager at Eden-Valders Stone, approached Fond du Lac Literacy Services (FLS) about starting a workplace literacy program to teach English to 30 workers.

Because FLS had never implemented a workplace literacy program, they turned to us for support. Our Regional Literacy Consultants shared best practices, templates, and connected FDL to another member agency with years of workplace literacy experience. FLS also accessed our recorded webinar “Workplace Literacy Fee-for-Service: What is it and how does my agency get started?”

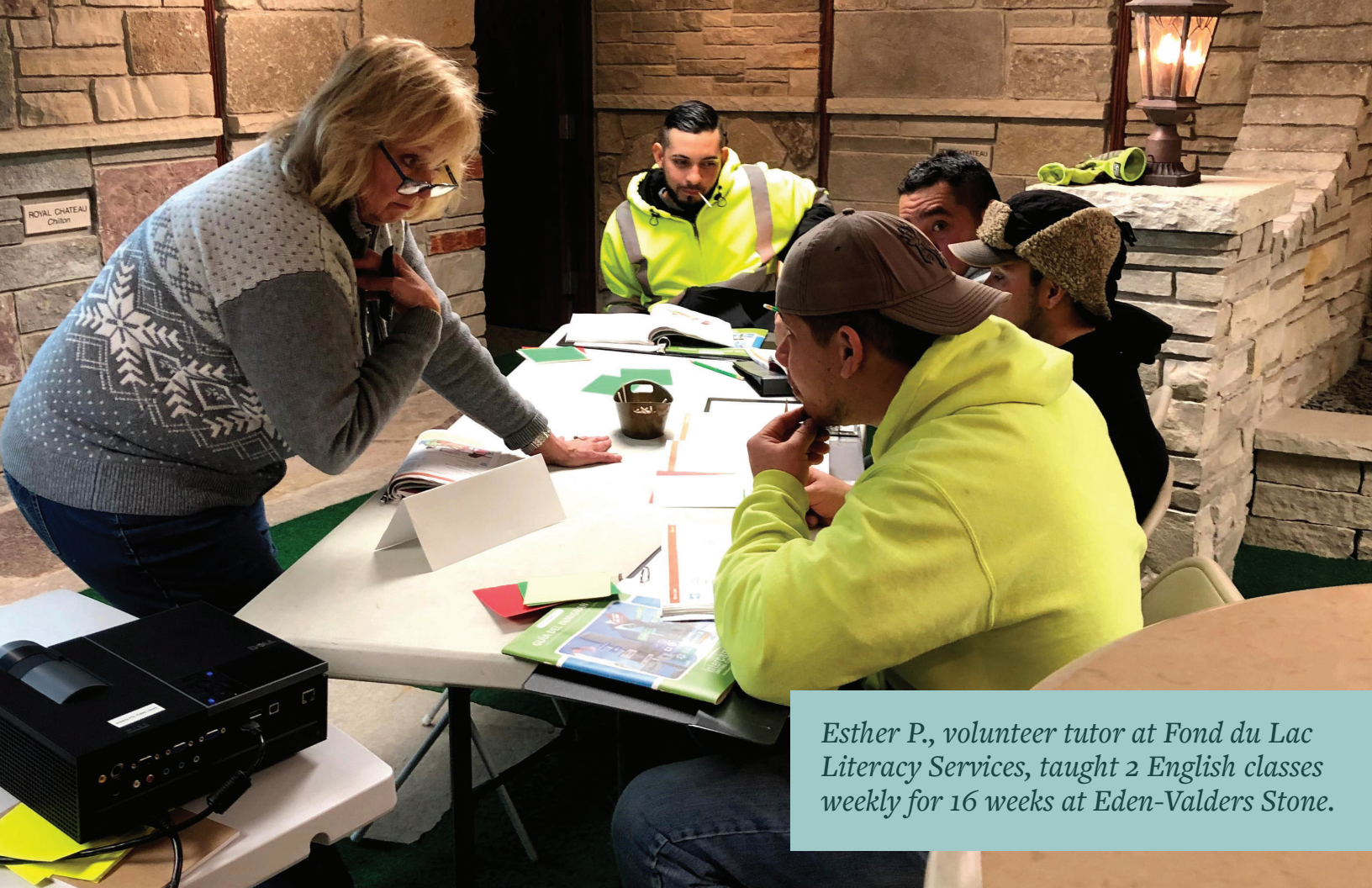
FLS can now make learning more accessible by offering employees English classes right at work.

*“I’m excited to hear from some of the supervisors that their employees were speaking more English,”* said Paula in a podcast interview with Bob Hoffmaster on KFIZ (<http://www.kfizpodcasts.com/4-15-19%20lit.mp3>).

Onsite workplace literacy programs benefit both employees and employers. Better communication skills increase worker productivity and employees with improved literacy have more freedom to pursue their dreams.

Your support builds the capacity of our member agencies to develop new workplace literacy programs in their communities.





*Esther P., volunteer tutor at Fond du Lac Literacy Services, taught 2 English classes weekly for 16 weeks at Eden-Valders Stone.*

## *Thank You to Donors, Grant Funders and Sponsors (July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019)*

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Wisconsin Department of Children and  
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Wisconsin Technical College System

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*Thanks to these organizations who have partnered with us to provide health literacy services.*

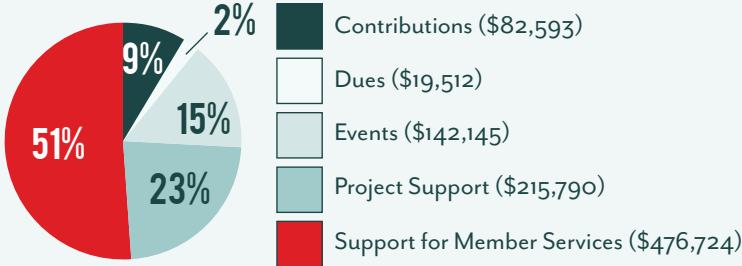
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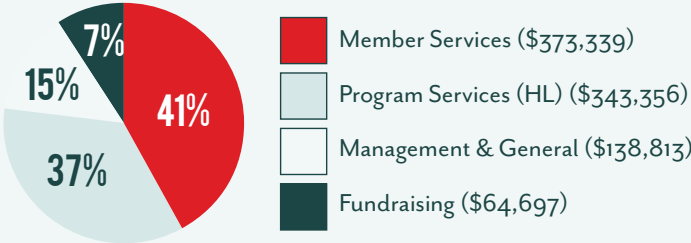


# Financial Highlights

## REVENUE \$936,764



## EXPENSES \$920,205



## 2018-19 Members

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Adult Literacy Center of Ozaukee County, Inc.  
Alternative Center for Education  
Baraboo Area Literacy Council  
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### *Our Mission*

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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### *Contact Us*

(608) 257-1655  
info@wisconsinliteracy.org  
211 S. Paterson St.  
Suite 170  
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