



**wisconsin**  **literacy** Annual Report 2011-2012

# Wisconsin Literacy Member Agencies

Adult Literacy Center - Ozaukee County • Adult R.E.A.D. Program • Agape Community Center Literacy Program • Alternative Center for Education • Ashland-Bayfield Counties Literacy Council • Baraboo Area Literacy Council • Barron County Area Literacy Council • Clara Fields Multicultural Literacy Program • Community Partners in Literacy – Manitowoc • Coulee Region Literacy Council • Council for the Spanish Speaking • Crawford County Literacy Council • Family Literacy of Racine • Family Resource Centers of Sheboygan County Literacy Council Project • Fond du Lac Adult Literacy Services • Fox Valley Literacy • Friends of the Hartford Library Literacy Program • Grant County Family Literacy Services • HOPE Academy of Western Wisconsin • ICAA Crossroads Literacy • ICAA Washburn and Sawyer County Literacy • Iowa County Literacy Council • International Learning Center • Jefferson County Literacy Council • Journey House Family Learning Center • Kenosha Literacy Council • Lake Superior Tutoring Center for Dyslexic Children and Adults • LCOOCC Adult Basic Education Program • Literacy Council of Greater Waukesha • Literacy Council of Green County • Literacy Council of Superior/Douglas County • Literacy Council of Wood County • Literacy Green Bay • Literacy Network • Literacy Partners of Kewaunee County • Literacy Services of Wisconsin • Literacy Task Force of Northern Wisconsin • Literacy Volunteers – Chippewa Valley • Literacy Volunteers – Marquette County • Marathon County Literacy Council • Marinette & Oconto Counties Literacy • Milwaukee Achiever Literacy Services • Milwaukee Public Library Drop In Tutoring Program • Moving Forward Literacy • Neighborhood Learning Center • Next Door Foundation Adult Education/ GED Program • Northern Region Family Literacy • Northern Waters Literacy • Omega School • Page Forward Volunteers for Literacy in Clark County • Portage County Literacy Council • Racine Literacy Council • Richland County Literacy Council • Sauk Prairie Area Literacy Council • Shawano County Literacy Council • St. Francis Public Library ELL Program • Stateline Literacy Council • Taylor County Literacy Council • The Literacy Connection • Walworth County Literacy Council • West CAP Literacy and Skills Enhancement Program • Winnebago County Literacy Council • Wisconsin Dells Literacy Council • Wisconsin Institute for Learning Disabilities/Dyslexia • Wisconsin Institutions Literacy Council

*Cover Photo: Indianhead Community Action Agency – Crossroads Literacy*



Dear Friends of Wisconsin Literacy,

During the past year, we have grown to serve 65 member literacy agencies throughout the state with resources and information on instruction, sustainability and health literacy programming. Wisconsin Literacy's work focused on improving our members' capacity to offer computer, numeracy and job readiness skills to their adult learners. We developed training in numeracy, created models of community collaboration around computer skills and job readiness, and designed and presented workforce conferences that helped educational and workforce providers connect adults to career pathways. We also worked with the Governor and State Superintendent of Schools on the *Read to Lead Task Force* that created new policy to improve reading outcomes for our youngest readers.

Changing lives through literacy happens when our state's literacy programs are strong, connected to valued resources and able to implement best practices suggested by our regional literacy consultants. At Wisconsin Literacy, we are proud to serve our members and community partners and, ultimately, the adults whose lives are changed through literacy. We hope you will join us as a change agent.

Looking forward,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michele B. Erikson".

Michele Erikson

Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jill Ottow".

Jill Ottow

Board President

# Members and Community

A key component in building the capacity of our 65 member agencies is Wisconsin Literacy's four regional literacy consultants (RLCs). Situated in all four corners of the state, they perform a wide range of duties including guidance on fund development, board enhancement, data management and reporting, and best practices.

Each RLC provides individual consultations with agencies in their region. The RLCs help member agencies implement national and state standards and professional development trainings. These benefits are provided to members with the goal of better preparing adult learners for post-secondary education and meaningful job opportunities. During the past year, Wisconsin Literacy provided resources to members that help learners succeed in a new General Educational Development (GED) certificate process and promoted current GED completion before new standards and computer-based testing take effect in 2014. Professional development opportunities in adult literacy curriculum, health literacy and workforce development took place in each of the four regions.

*Opposite page: Marsha Connet (left), Southeast Regional Literacy Consultant for Wisconsin Literacy, shares computer resources for adult learners with a Kenosha Literacy Council volunteer during a tutor in-service.*







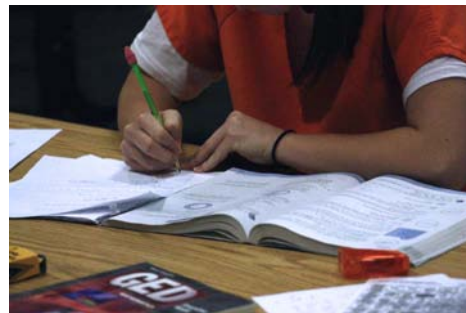
*Above: Wisconsin Literacy Executive Director Michele Erikson (left) with Pathways to Employment Keynote Speaker Jennifer Foster, Senior Director for Adult Education and Family Literacy/State Director for GED Testing Administration at the Illinois Community College Board*

*Right side photos: Participants of Wisconsin Literacy's Pathways to Employment: Preparing Wisconsin's Job Seekers conference in Janesville*

# Workforce

As the economy improves and jobs become more available, it is imperative that our shrinking labor pool is qualified to meet the necessary skill level to keep Wisconsin's companies competitive. Wisconsin Literacy has spent much of the year developing strategies, resources and trainings around job readiness, computer use and numeracy. We are working to provide our members with valuable resources to prepare learners for the new General Educational Development (GED) certificate that they will be required to complete on-line beginning in 2014. This change to computer-based testing is a significant leap for many of our adult learners who will also be challenged by more rigorous tests and increased costs.

Wisconsin Literacy has designed and implemented professional development opportunities for many educational and workforce providers with our *Pathways to Employment: Preparing Wisconsin's Job Seekers* conferences. These conferences, held in Janesville, and scheduled for Wausau and Milwaukee in the current year, are designed to deliver hands-on resources to educational and workforce providers that guide adult learners on to meaningful career pathways or training certificate programs.



*An adult learner studies for the GED with materials provided by Jefferson County Literacy Council (Photo by Rachel Primmer).*

# Health Literacy

Health Literacy Wisconsin (HLW) has been raising awareness of health literacy and its connection to health outcomes through a statewide flu prevention program, “Let’s Talk About the Flu.” During the fall and winter of 2011-2012, HLW provided 53 educational workshops to 943 adults with limited literacy throughout Wisconsin. The goals of the workshops were to make flu prevention information accessible to all, regardless of literacy skills, and to promote flu vaccination. Trained adult literacy instructors led the workshops using materials developed by HLW, which included easy-to-read text and engaging graphics.

Workshops were hosted in trusted community locations, such as adult literacy agencies, neighborhood and senior centers, and homeless shelters. The project was funded by Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation. HLW also worked with Walgreens to provide free flu vaccine vouchers and a free “flu kit” for participants. Project results demonstrated increased knowledge of flu prevention and increased vaccination among participants.



*Hmong elders laugh during a Health Literacy Wisconsin flu prevention workshop at Kajsiab House in Madison. HLW regularly partners with community-based agencies throughout the state to share plain language health information.*



## 2011-2012 Flu Season Let's Talk About the Flu Workshops:

*As a result of the program, the following outcomes were observed:*

**943**  
Participants

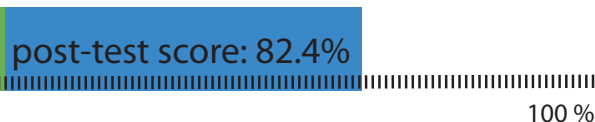


Participants improved their knowledge of flu prevention basics:

### Before



### After



We obtained information about the major reasons why people got a flu vaccine:

### Major reasons people *did not* get a flu vaccine in the past

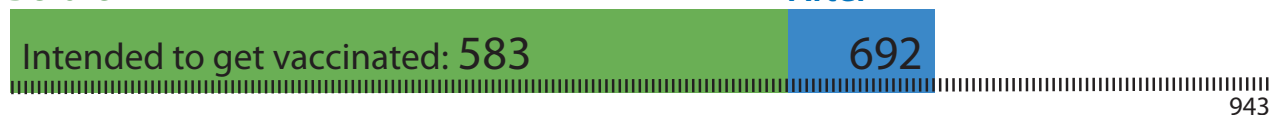
1. I am healthy/have a strong immune system
2. I just don't want it/don't think it is necessary
3. I could not afford it/did not have insurance

### Major reasons people *got* a flu vaccine in the past:

1. I want to prevent the flu
2. My doctor recommended it
3. To protect my baby/family

41% of participants received a flu vaccine, 30% as a direct result of program activities:

### Before



### After





*Jason and his son enjoy their time together reading. Jason completed his GED with the help of Omega School, a Wisconsin Literacy member agency, and is now close to obtaining his degree in Communications from UW-Whitewater.*

# Government and Policy

The foundational literacy skills a child acquires early in life are essential to support all later learning. That is why Wisconsin Literacy was invited to be part of the Governor's bi-partisan *Read to Lead Task Force*, focusing on improving reading proficiency by third grade. While our member programs serve mainly adults, children's success in reading is integrally tied to the literacy level of the adults in their lives. After a year of study, discussion and debate, a report was presented and legislation was adopted on April 2, 2012 that will help improve reading outcomes in Wisconsin. These include early literacy screening for all five-year-old kindergarteners, a more rigorous pathway for teacher preparation and licensure, and more targeted professional development opportunities for current reading educators.

Wisconsin Literacy was also involved in providing literacy resources for adults and parents on the *Read to Lead* website at [www.read.wi.gov](http://www.read.wi.gov). Our long-term plan around this effort is to more fully connect early childhood reading efforts to the adult literacy agencies in many Wisconsin communities so that improved reading will truly become a family affair.

# Donors

July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012

**Foundations:** Alliant Energy Foundation • Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation • Dollar General Literacy Foundation • Neese Family Foundation • The Beloit Foundation, Inc.

**Honorariums:** American Academy of Pediatrics – Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program • Arrowhead Library System • Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin • Health Care Education and Training, Inc. • Meriter Hospital • Paul D. Smith, M.D. • State of WI Dept. of Health Services, Division of Public Health • National Network of Libraries of Medicine • The Bellin Health Foundation

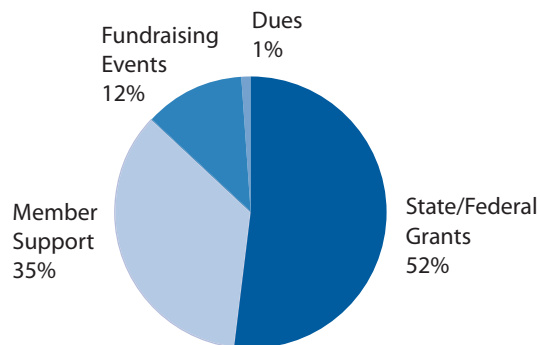
**Organizations:** Altrusa International, Inc. of Madison • American Family Insurance • Blackhawk Community Credit Union • Community Action, Inc. of Rock & Walworth Counties • Dean & St. Mary's • The Douglas Stewart Company, Inc. • Gordon Flesch Company, Inc. • Gundersen Lutheran • Herbert H. Kohl Charities, Inc. • Navitus Health Solutions, LLC • Promega Corporation • Raven Software • Southern Wisconsin Interpreting & Translation Services, Ltd. • Southwest Wisconsin AHEC, Inc. • Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board • Verizon Reads, Inc. • Wegner CPAs • Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction • Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation • Wisconsin Technical College System

**Gifts In-Kind:** Blackhawk Human Resources Association • Em Software • Little Free Libraries • Omega School, Inc. • Walgreens • Wisconsin Historical Society Press



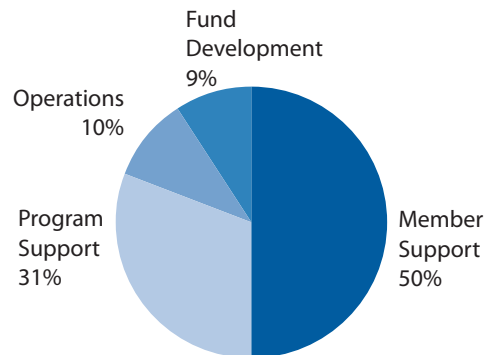
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# Financial Highlights



## Funds Raised

State/Federal Grants	205,817	52%
Member Support	135,777	35%
Fundraising Events	46,162	12%
Dues	5,445	1%
Miscellaneous Income and Interest Earned	39	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$393,240</b>	<b>100%</b>



## Funds Used

Member Support	196,044	50%
Program Support	119,393	31%
Operations	39,359	10%
Fund Development	34,583	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$389,379</b>	<b>100%</b>

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**Staff:**

Michele Erikson, *Executive Director*  
Erin Agesen, *Health Literacy Director*  
Gia Kiley, *Operations Director*  
Jim Stickels, *Fund Development Manager*  
Margarete Cook, *Northwest Regional Literacy Consultant*  
Andrea Pease, *Northeast Regional Literacy Consultant*  
Georgia Lieber, *Southwest/South Central Regional Literacy Consultant*  
Marsha Connet, *Southeast Regional Literacy Consultant*

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Dave Endres, *Vice President*        Kelli Thompson, *Past President*  
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Literacy Coalition of Southeastern Wisconsin  
St. Mary's Hospital  
Wisconsin Area Health Education Centers  
Wisconsin Branch of the International Dyslexia Association  
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction  
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*Strengthening Wisconsin's workforce, families and communities through literacy*

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