

LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS

LITERACY AWARDS

2017



A MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

“Once you learn to read, you will be forever free.” So said the great orator and statesman Frederick Douglass.

The Library of Congress Literacy Awards were created by philanthropist David M. Rubenstein with that dictum in mind. There are thousands of studies citing the obstacles and impediments that people who cannot read face. The studies may not agree on numbers, but one thing they do agree on is that literacy is essential to success in life. Those who cannot read often find it impossible to find a job or get needed health care or even to do something as simple as read a road sign. An ancillary problem is aliteracy: being able to read but, for whatever reason, choosing not to.

Promoting literacy is inextricably linked to the Library’s mission to provide Congress, the federal government and the American people with a rich, diverse and enduring source of knowledge. But the information contained in that knowledge cannot be accessed if one cannot read.

In 2013, Mr. Rubenstein established the Literacy Awards to recognize organizations that have made outstanding contributions to increasing literacy in the United States or abroad. The awards also encourage the continuing development of innovative methods for promoting literacy and the wide dissemination of the most effective practices. They are intended to draw public attention to the importance of literacy and the need to promote literacy and encourage reading.

The three award winners and 15 best practices honorees bring to 78 the number of organizations worldwide that have received Library of Congress Literacy Awards recognition. To date, more than \$1 million has been awarded. Applicants came from 19 U.S. states and 19 countries.

The 2017 winners are:

The David M. Rubenstein Prize (\$150,000): The Children’s Literacy Initiative

The prize is awarded for an outstanding and measurable contribution to increasing literacy levels to an organization based either inside or outside the United States that has demonstrated exceptional and sustained depth in its commitment to the advancement of literacy.

The American Prize (\$50,000): National Center for Families Learning

The prize is awarded for a significant and measurable contribution to increasing literacy levels or the national awareness of the importance of literacy to an organization that is based in the United States.

The International Prize (\$50,000): Pratham Books

The prize is awarded for a significant and measurable contribution to increasing literacy levels to an organization that is based outside the United States.

The Library of Congress wishes to thank the members of the Literacy Awards Advisory Board for their longtime commitment of time and expertise to this worthy endeavor.

This marks the last year of the Literacy Awards’ five-year pilot. Much has been learned about literacy and the myriad ways that civic-minded organizations around the world are working to eradicate this intellectual pestilence.



LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS
LITERACY AWARDS

2017

WINNERS &
BEST PRACTICE HONOREES

On the cover: Detail of stucco relief around dome in Librarian's Room,
Thomas Jefferson Building. Photo by Carol M. Highsmith.



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As the winners of the 2017 Library of Congress Literacy Awards, Children's Literacy Initiative, National Center for Families Learning and Pratham Books demonstrate the highest levels of effectiveness and dedication to the cause of literacy promotion. These three organizations are empowering people around the world by providing education, mentorship and increased access to books and reading. Each is an example of the standard by which the prizes are judged.



The David M. Rubenstein Prize (\$150,000) is awarded to an organization that has made outstanding and measurable contributions in increasing literacy levels and has demonstrated exceptional and sustained depth and breadth in its commitment to the advancement of literacy. The organization meets the highest standards of excellence in its operations and services. This award may be given to any organization based either inside or outside the United States.



The American Prize (\$50,000) is awarded to an organization that has made a significant and measurable contribution to increasing literacy levels or the national awareness of the importance of literacy. This award may be given to any organization that is based in the United States.



The International Prize (\$50,000) is awarded to an organization or national entity that has made a significant and measurable contribution to increasing literacy levels. This award may be given to any organization that is based in a country outside the United States.



CHILDREN'S LITERACY INITIATIVE


**CHILDREN'S LITERACY
INITIATIVE**

LOCATION:
Philadelphia

SERVICE AREA:
U.S. education community

POPULATION SERVED:
7,000 teachers

FOUNDED:
1988

WEBSITE:
cli.org



The Children's Literacy Initiative works with pre-K through third-grade teachers to improve early literacy instruction so children become powerful readers, writers and thinkers. CLI creates a sustainable, schoolwide culture of literacy that introduces students to the joys of reading, writing and lifelong learning. The organization coaches teachers one-on-one and in small groups in the classroom, providing demonstrations and feedback that help teachers incorporate effective literacy practices into their daily work with students. It stocks classrooms with learning materials and collections of high-quality children's literature and extends its services with online professional development resources. CLI provides workshops and seminars to build a teacher's knowledge of literacy content and pedagogy.

Because the quality of teaching has a greater effect on student achievement than any other in-school factor, the Children's Literacy Initiative delivers content-focused coaching to educators who work in under-resourced schools with lagging literacy achievement, equipping them with high-impact strategies and techniques for literacy instruction and providing their classrooms with high-quality children's literature.



CLI is a two-time Investing in Innovation (i3) grantee. The organization's Investing in Innovation (i3) Validation grant in 2010–2015 reached nearly 500 teachers annually and affected more than 55,000 high-needs students during the project, which focused on four low-performing urban districts: Chicago, Philadelphia, Camden and Newark.

CLI plans on increasing the geographic replicability of the program to other school districts, continuing its innovations in digital technology by migrating paper-based training to digitally based training and expanding its pre-kindergarten program by establishing an independent business unit. In building a viable pre-K business unit, CLI's objective is to increase the availability of its program to centers and schools across the country.

By supporting teachers with training and coaching in early literacy best practices, CLI provides teachers with the opportunity to empower their students in ways that continue beyond third grade.



NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILIES LEARNING



NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILIES LEARNING

LOCATION:
Louisville, KY

SERVICE AREA:
National

POPULATION SERVED:
4 million families annually
through placed-based and
digital programming

FOUNDED:
1989

WEBSITE:
familieslearning.org

The National Center for Families Learning works to eradicate poverty through educational solutions for families. Throughout its 28-year history, NCFL has changed the lives of millions of families across the country by providing literacy strategies, programming and resources. Engaging multiple generations of the same family together has been a fundamental and distinguishing aspect of NCFL's work. The results have shown a stronger impact and greater success for families.

NCFL advances literacy and education by developing, implementing and documenting innovative and promising intergenerational strategies in these areas:

- **Two-generation practices.** The heart of NCFL's work lies in its dedication to working with community partners to develop model programs and innovative laboratories. These improve family literacy opportunities by addressing the multigenerational educational needs of families through community grants, mobile learning platforms and a website community that inspires families to learn together.
- **Tools to assist literacy and learning efforts.** NCFL's tools and services can benefit all families. Its primary focus is to enable parents and children living in poverty and struggling with low literacy and language skills to improve their lives and become strong contributors to society.
- **Professional development and expertise.** Building a more literate population takes a nation of well-informed educators. NCFL supports family literacy and learning practitioners in their aid to families in need by providing the latest in professional development and best practice expertise.
- **Community and coalition building.** NCFL leverages resources to expand its programming footprint in a manner that builds partnerships and strengthens grassroots community offerings.
- **Research.** Many of NCFL's initiatives and resources are based on the latest industry research. The result of this research aligns the NCFL model with the current and relevant needs of its constituency.





**PRATHAM
BOOKS**

A Book in Every Child's Hand

PRATHAM BOOKS

LOCATION:

Bangalore, India

SERVICE AREA:

India

POPULATION SERVED:

Children from ages 3 to 14 who need books, especially in the mother language

FOUNDED:

2004

WEBSITE:

prathambooks.org

PRATHAM BOOKS



There are critical supply shortages of reading resources for children in India and across many parts of the developing world: not enough books in not enough languages, compounded by poor access and issues of affordability. As most publishers cater to middle- and upper-income urban audiences, books for low-income groups are in very short supply. Cognizant of this reality, Pratham Books, one of India's largest nonprofit children's book publishers, created an alternative model to address these inequities by providing quality reading books for low-income children in mother-tongue languages.

Pratham books span a range of genres—from fiction to stories based on science, history, mathematics, the environment and more. Its colorful books are available in print and digital formats and are a much-needed addition to reading programs and libraries.

In 13 years Pratham Books has published more than 350 titles in 20 Indian languages and distributed over 30 million books and story cards (mini books). However, the challenge was to massively scale the creation of content for a highly multilingual and multicultural country such as India.



Pratham Books thus launched StoryWeaver (storyweaver.org.in), an online, digital repository of multilingual children's stories, on International Literacy Day in 2015. All the content on the platform is openly licensed, giving users free access to the stories in mother-tongue languages, as well as the power to create, translate and repurpose these stories based on their own requirements, using the tools embedded in the platform.

In the two years since StoryWeaver's launch, the digital repository has grown from 800 stories in 24 languages to over 6,100 stories in 102 languages. The 370,000-member StoryWeaver community is spread across 190 countries, and they have read StoryWeaver stories both online and offline more than 2 million times.

Another way that Pratham reaches more children is through its crowd-funding platform, Donate-A-Book (donateabook.org.in). The platform connects those who need children's books with those who can help get those books to them. Donate-A-Book has helped people donate over 1 million books to more than 2.8 million happy children across India.





In addition to the three award winners, the Library of Congress Literacy Awards Advisory Board has chosen 15 Best Practices Honorees, whose work is worthy of special recognition.

These honorees exemplify work that is at once extremely effective yet easily replicable. It is hoped that other literacy organizations will emulate some of the practices described herein. Such organizations are often underfunded. But what they lack in financial resources they more than make up for in enthusiasm and influence. By using and adapting some of these best practices, organizations can leverage scarce resources.

Four areas of best practices are presented here, along with the organizations whose primary focus supports those practices. These literacy organizations excel particularly well at providing culturally relevant books, addressing adult literacy, focusing on literacy in a familial context, and using reading instruction and tutoring to increase literacy.

Many of the 15 featured organizations are exploiting the power of technology to achieve their goals, while others are employing tried-and-true techniques. The point is that an excellent literacy program can be either high- or low-tech. Success is best measured by outcomes rather than by the means of getting there. The three award winners and 15 honorees all have one thing in common: Their programs are tailored to the populations they serve and thus have achieved outstanding results.



CULTURALLY RELEVANT BOOKS & LITERACY



The United States is becoming a majority–minority nation. Five states—Hawaii (which has never had a white majority), California, Nevada, New Mexico and Texas—already have populations that are fewer than 50 percent non-Hispanic white—and the District of Columbia has held that status for decades.¹

It is thus important for books to reflect ethnic and cultural shifts. Books for young people are increasingly reflective of current population trends, and there are even organizations, such as We Need Diverse Books, dedicated to advocating for “essential changes in the publishing industry to produce and promote

literature that reflects and honors the lives of all young people.”²

Five of this year’s 15 Best Practices honorees fall into the category of Culturally Relevant Books & Literacy. These organizations—Story Shares, CODE, Sealaska Heritage Institute, Yayasan Sulinama and Centre for Knowledge Assistance and Community Development—all serve very different populations, but they have one thing in common: They are all steadfast in their commitment to providing books and programs that serve specific populations.

THERE IS SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL ABOUT READING A STORY WITH CHARACTERS WHO LOOK LIKE THEIR READERS



It is always interesting to read about other cultures, but there is something very special about reading a story with characters who look like their readers. These stories offer a unique connection, and thus they encourage readership among the populations they represent.

They cultivate a greater interest in reading. Some of the organizations honored here are using new technologies to reach specific groups. But just as many rely on a centuries-old technology to achieve their purpose: the printed word.



STORY SHARES



STORY SHARES

LOCATION:
Boston /Philadelphia

SERVICE AREA:
Internet

POPULATION SERVED:
Teens and young adults
who read below their
grade level

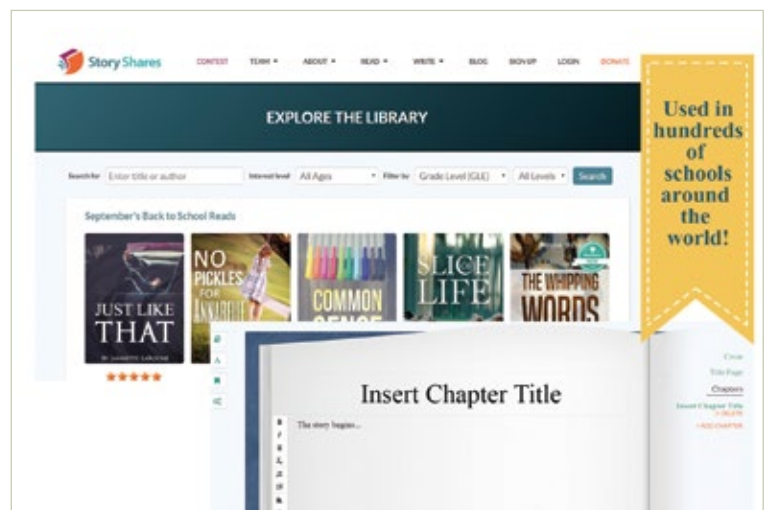
FOUNDED:
2013–2014

WEBSITE:
storyshares.org

Story Shares is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization devoted to inspiring reading practice and improving literacy skills. Its library is full of Relevant Reads—books created by users that are both compelling and approachable for struggling teen and young adult readers.

The Story Shares Hub connects authors, readers and educators. For authors, the Hub provides a digital book builder to guide the creation of appropriate content and provide access to a large group of potential readers. For readers and educators, the Hub provides a library of newly created, relatable and appropriate content at a range of levels, enhanced with built-in reading assists to make it more approachable.

The organization aims to create a new shelf in the library for the older students who have been overlooked. By leveraging the combined powers of great books and interactive web design, the Story Shares’ “literacy hub” brings together a community to engage and support readers who struggle.



CODE



CODE

LOCATION:
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

SERVICE AREA:
Africa Caribbean and Canada

POPULATION SERVED:
Africa; Caribbean; First Nations, Inuit and Métis of Canada

FOUNDED:
1959

WEBSITE:
code.ngo

CODE has been removing the barriers to quality education for the world’s poorest and most marginalized children and youth for almost 60 years. Established initially as a donated-book program in a Toronto church basement, CODE is today an evidence-based, UNESCO Award-winning, educational development organization focused on improving learning outcomes for students across the K-12 spectrum. CODE works primarily in eight African countries, in the Caribbean and with Canada’s First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities.

CODE’s core literacy program is based on the notion that for children to grow up into literate, independent, informed decision makers who can think critically and successfully navigate the world around them, they need sustained access to relevant, quality reading materials and to benefit from skilled teachers. To deliver on this, CODE drew on decades of international experience and well-documented evidence describing ways children and youth learn best, to develop its “comprehensive readership approach” or Reading CODE. While each national program we support is unique to that country, culture and language, the Reading CODE approach universally:

- Values and builds on prior experiences and knowledge and encourages children to explore, interact with, discover and reflect on the world around them.
- Develops and makes available books and learning materials by local authors and publishers that are anchored in the local culture and languages in which the child and teacher live.
- Undertakes professional development for educators to ensure they have the skills to use the materials effectively and have access to locally developed teaching and learning aids that support differential learning and the creation of text-rich environments.

To make sure literacy initiatives take root and yield results over the long term, Reading CODE joins these factors with another: partnerships to build the capacity of in-country teams so that they can continue to provide engaging books to children and high-quality training for teachers. Last year, Reading CODE created and helped publish and distribute to schools and libraries more than 300,000 children’s books in 17 languages.



SEALASKA HERITAGE INSTITUTE



SEALASKA HERITAGE INSTITUTE

LOCATION:
Juneau, Alaska

SERVICE AREA:
Southeast Alaska

POPULATION SERVED:
Alaskans

FOUNDED:
1980

WEBSITE:
sealaskaheritage.org

Sealaska Heritage Institute is a private nonprofit founded in 1980 to perpetuate and enhance Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian cultures of Southeast Alaska. Its goal is to promote cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding through public services and events. Sealaska also conducts social, scientific and public policy research and advocacy that promote Alaska Native arts, cultures, history and education statewide. The institute is governed by a Board of Trustees and guided by a Council of Traditional Scholars, a Native Artist Committee and a Southeast Regional Language Committee.



Sealaska offers numerous programs promoting Southeast Alaskan Native culture, including language and art. It maintains a substantial archive of Southeast Alaskan Native ethnographic material and partners with local schools to promote academics and cultural education. Biennially, the organization produces Celebration, Alaska's second-largest Native gathering. It also owns and operates the Sealaska Heritage Store and produces True Southeast, a continuing cultural exhibit in Sealaska's headquarters in Juneau's landmark Walter Soboleff Building.

For more than 10,000 years, the Native people of Alaska have been guided by ancient values that allowed them to adapt to rapid cultural changes and to survive as a distinct cultural group. Today, they are seeking to integrate their cultural values into the institutions that directly serve their people.





YAYASAN SULINAMA

LOCATION:

Ambon, Maluku Province,
Indonesia

SERVICE AREA:

Indonesia

POPULATION SERVED:

Preschool-aged children
and early graders

FOUNDED:

2001

WEBSITE:

yayasansulinama.com

YAYASAN SULINAMA



Yayasan Sulinama is a nonprofit local development organization whose vision is to improve the lives of the people of Maluku and beyond through programs devoted to community development (social, economic, health), education, literacy and language development. YS believes it can achieve this vision by equipping the community with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for a successful life.

In the past seven years YS has been working primarily with private preschools in central Maluku, ages 3 to 6. The children, living in town and in rural areas, mostly come from low-income families. Many of them do not have quality preschool education and are not well equipped to enter primary education. As has been learned through surveys, many schoolchildren in early grades still cannot read and write well (mostly in some eastern regions of the country and generally in rural areas).



Many children do not attend preschool education because their parents cannot afford the fees, which also results in underfunded schools. This situation, among others, has resulted in poor quality preschool schools and teachers.

Sulinama's vision is to have preschool children well equipped cognitively, mentally and physically, so that they are mature enough to enter higher education.



CENTRE FOR KNOWLEDGE ASSISTANCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



CENTRE FOR KNOWLEDGE ASSISTANCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

LOCATION:
Hanoi, Vietnam

SERVICE AREA:
Rural areas of Vietnam

POPULATION SERVED:
Rural areas of Vietnam that do not have access to books

FOUNDED:
2010

WEBSITE:
en.vietnamplus.vn

Vietnam has made impressive progress in education in the past 30 years, but rural and mountainous areas of the country still suffer from a great shortage of books and an undeveloped library system. For millions of children in rural and mountainous areas, their only contact with literature is in the form of textbooks.

Nguyen Quang Thach, who spent 20 years studying library design and applying library models, started his work in 2007 with three libraries and expanded with the help of funding to build 28 libraries in nine provinces.

In 2009, using money he won in a social initiative competition, he gave up his job to devote his life to establishing libraries. In 2010 he founded the Centre for Knowledge Assistance and Community Development using donated or reduced-rate books and offering different library models: clan, parish, classrooms and community for marginalized groups.

The program has changed the structure of the country's library system, offering models that are cheap and practical. Beyond building infrastructures, the program also provides hands-on training and collaborative teamwork to operate the libraries and create activities to encourage reading.

To date, the civil library system that was replicated by hundreds of thousands of people living in Vietnam and other countries has made books easily accessible to nearly 1 million readers in rural areas, and it has established more than 20,000 libraries in 45 provinces and cities. The program will be replicated nationwide to cover all 63 provinces, reaching around 20 million rural people by 2020.



ADULT LITERACY

Adult illiteracy wreaks an enormous toll, both socially as well as economically. And it is a remarkably accurate predictor of outcomes in life.

At the lowest literacy levels, 43 percent of adults live in poverty and 70 percent of adult welfare recipients have low literacy levels.³ Naturally, it follows that these people have higher rates of unemployment and lower-

than-average wages.

According to the National Council for Adult Learning, these factors cost the U.S. economy at least \$225 billion annually in nonproductivity in the workforce, loss of tax revenue and crime. We know that 75 percent of state prison inmates did not complete high school or are low literate.⁴

The three Best Practices organizations that fall into this category address very specific issues and



populations within the overall rubric of Adult Literacy: adults in New Mexico, women in Afghanistan and those afflicted with Alzheimer's disease.

Illiteracy and low levels of literacy have an effect on offspring as well, creating a persistent cycle of low literacy and poor academic performance. In fact, almost three-fourths of children with low-literacy parents will be at the lowest reading levels themselves.⁵

The sooner there is intervention to break the cycle of illiteracy, the better, but as these organizations demonstrate, it is never too late to reach someone in need of literacy training.



ADULT ILLITERACY
IS A REMARKABLY
ACCURATE PREDICTOR
OF OUTCOMES IN LIFE



READING WORKS INC.



Reading Works' mission is to provide adults with the literacy and language skills they need to participate fully and effectively in work, civic life and community. To fulfill its mission, trained community volunteers provide free tutoring to adults in reading, writing, math, digital literacy and English as a Second Language.

Reading Works was inspired by a 19-year-old, high school graduate who could not read. Founder Margaret

Barker tutored him for five years at the local community college. By the end of their time together, he was ready to take classes at the community college. There was no community-based program in Albuquerque to help low-literate adults, and Barker wanted to do something about it. She created Reading Works 10 years ago. The organization served its first client in 2009 and since then has provided free tutoring to 1,077 adults and 1,831 children.

This year Reading Works started using its own proprietary curriculum, called 12 Weeks to Reading, which provides a structured approach to teaching the fundamental skills of phonemic and alphabetic awareness. Phonemic awareness is the knowledge of the 44 sounds of English, and alphabetic awareness is the knowledge of how the alphabet symbols represent those sounds. 12 Weeks to Reading can be taught as a standalone course or in conjunction with goal-oriented tutoring. The curriculum is effective for both reading and ESL students.



READING WORKS INC.

LOCATION:
Albuquerque, NM

SERVICE AREA:
Bernalillo County, NM

POPULATION SERVED:
Adults with literacy problems in reading and writing, English as a Second Language (ESL), math and digital literacy

FOUNDED:
2007

WEBSITE:
reading-works.org





**CANADIAN WOMEN
FOR WOMEN IN
AFGHANISTAN**

LOCATION:

Calgary, Canada, and Kabul,
Afghanistan

SERVICE AREA:

Afghanistan

POPULATION SERVED:

Afghan women, girls and
their families

FOUNDED:

1998

WEBSITE:

cw4wafghan.ca

CANADIAN WOMEN FOR WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN



Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan (CW4WAfghan) is a member-based, Canadian federally registered not-for-profit organization founded in 1998. The goals of CW4WAfghan are to advance education and educational opportunities for Afghan women and their families, and to educate Canadians about human rights in Afghanistan. Donor-funded projects fall within three main field program areas: investments in basic education, community libraries, literacy and books program, and technology for education.

CW4WAfghan programs aim at increasing access to quality education for Afghan women and girls as a pathway toward their empowerment.

Having supported education projects

in Afghanistan for almost two decades, CW4WAfghan has developed proven project management systems and models. One of those models is the Afghanistan Reads! program, which combines literacy classes with libraries, and has helped thousands of Afghan women learn to read.

In Canada, approximately 2,000 members demonstrate their commitment as global citizens by supporting the goals of CW4WAfghan. Members have the opportunity to volunteer at events and participate in activities through a regional chapter network. In Afghanistan, there is a dynamic and

talented team of Afghan professionals who manage, implement, monitor and provide support services for CW4WAfghan's programs and operations in Afghanistan. CW4WAfghan volunteers and staff believe that individuals, as global citizens, working in solidarity and with integrity of purpose and action, can effect positive change in the world through education and the promotion of social justice and human rights.

The mission: Canadians taking action, in partnership with Afghan women, toward improving conditions of human rights, ending women's oppression and providing opportunities for Afghan women to live their lives with dignity, certainty and purpose.



TALES & TRAVEL MEMORIES

Tales & Travel Memories is an innovative project that provides library services directly to people diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, not just to their caregivers. Nursing homes and their residents have given it a positive reception, thereby demonstrating an important need for serving this special population. Designed by retired academic librarian Mary Beth Riedner and Gail Borden Public Library District staff and volunteers, the series is offered monthly to local memory care facilities. Developed in compliance with the International Federation of Library Associations' (IFLA) Guidelines for Library Services to Persons with dementia, each one-hour program uses the theme of an imaginary excursion to a destination around the globe.

The Gail Borden Public Library adopted the Tales & Travel program with the purpose of expanding services to older adults. Tales & Travels is a one-hour program offered by the library at memory care facilities designed to engage individuals with dementia both socially and cognitively. A mixed method study funded by the National Institute of Health proved that the program:

- engaged and improved the cognitive and social interactions of individuals with dementia
- positively affected the relationship between caregivers and individuals with dementia by providing stimulating activities and reducing the number of stressful interactions
- expanded the library's outreach to an underserved population
- decreased stigma and stereotypes of adults with dementia by demonstrating elements of cognition that remain throughout the course of the disease



TALES & TRAVEL MEMORIES

LOCATION:

Elgin, IL

SERVICE AREA:

Gail Borden Public
Library District

POPULATION SERVED:

People diagnosed with
dementia and Alzheimer's
disease

FOUNDED:

2012

WEBSITE:

talesandtravelmemoies.
com



FAMILY LITERACY

“Family literacy is a term used to describe parents and children—or more broadly adults and children—learning together. Also known as intergenerational literacy, and in some cases, community literacy, the rationale underlying such work is that parents (and adults in communities) are children’s first teachers, that much learning occurs beyond traditional school settings, and that learning is a lifelong process.”⁶



Children naturally want to emulate their parents, and parents who are frequent readers can have a profound effect on their children.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, “Parents who read to their children, have books in their home, exhibit a positive attitude toward school and establish high achievement goals for their children tend to have higher achievers than parents who do not. Adults who have not mastered the basic skills cannot model appropriate literacy behavior and often pass on to their children the attitudes and abilities that keep them from breaking the cycle of illiteracy.”

The Asia Foundation, Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities and the State Library of Western Australia all focus on intergenerational literacy, recognizing that a parent is a child’s first teacher.⁷

When children read with their parents they do better in school, graduate at higher rates than those who do not read with parents, are more likely to attend college and are less likely to commit a crime. They also earn more.

**PARENTS WHO
ARE FREQUENT
READERS CAN
HAVE A PROFOUND
EFFECT ON THEIR
CHILDREN**



THE ASIA FOUNDATION



The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Informed by six decades of experience and deep local expertise, its work across the region addresses five overarching goals: strengthen governance, empower women, expand economic opportunity, increase environmental resilience and promote regional cooperation.

Headquartered in San Francisco, The Asia Foundation works through a network of offices in 18 Asian countries and in Washington, D.C. Working with public and private partners, the foundation receives funding from a diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations and individuals. In 2016, the foundation provided \$87.8 million in direct program support and distributed textbooks and other educational materials valued at \$9.5 million.

The Asia Foundation's Books for Asia program has assisted literacy efforts for more than 60 years and benefits an estimated 9 million people each year. Through its network, local staff identify and respond to the specific needs of children, schools, libraries and organizations implementing education programs.

Books for Asia implements two complementary initiatives, one for print books and the other for downloadable e-books. Since its inception in 1954, the print book program has donated more than 50 million books from American and local publishers to 28 countries. Today it annually provides a half-million high-quality books to schools, libraries and other organizations. Hard-working teachers and librarians in developing countries struggle to promote reading with limited resources; books delivered by The Asia Foundation are sometimes the only resources on the shelves of school libraries.

In 2015, the foundation launched the *Let's Read!* digital initiative to rapidly increase the volume and diversity of books in a way that transcends existing constraints. *Let's Read!* extends Books for Asia's reach by harnessing the power of mobile technology and employing a holistic "community, content, access" approach to ensure that children have access to local language books online or in print anytime, anywhere.



The Asia Foundation

THE ASIA FOUNDATION

LOCATION:

San Francisco, CA

SERVICE AREA:

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pacific island nations, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam

POPULATION SERVED:

Children, adults and institutions in 21 countries

FOUNDED:

1954

WEBSITE:

asiafoundation.org



LOUISIANA ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES



**LOUISIANA
ENDOWMENT FOR THE
HUMANITIES**

LOCATION:
New Orleans, LA

SERVICE AREA:
Nationwide

POPULATION SERVED:
Children, families
and educators

FOUNDED:
1991

WEBSITES:
leh.org
primetimefamily.org



Created by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities in 1991, PRIME TIME programs aim to create communities in which children and their families develop into self-directed, self-motivated learners who are eager to absorb the world around them through literature, questioning/inquiry and meaningful interaction and conversation with others.

For more than 25 years, LEH's signature PRIME TIME Family Reading programs have supported family literacy through story-sharing of high-quality, humanities-focused children's literature, followed by engaging, open-ended Socratic discussions—modeling approachable, replicable strategies to support at-home reading and a lifelong love of books and learning.



The PRIME TIME suite of programs, which now include PRIME TIME Head Start, PRIME TIME Family Reading Time, PRIME TIME Preschool, PRIME TIME Plus and PRIME TIME HomeRoom teacher professional development workshops, are proven to improve reading attitudes and behaviors, and increase reading frequency, vocabulary, cognitive skills, library patronage and parental engagement.

PRIME TIME programs have been implemented through partner sites such as libraries, schools, museums and other community service agencies throughout Louisiana's 64 parishes via grants and partnerships

managed by staff at the offices of PRIME TIME's parent organization, the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities. The programs have also been implemented in 40 other U.S. states and territories via PRIME TIME Inc.'s Affiliate Network.



STATE LIBRARY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



STATE LIBRARY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

LOCATION:

Perth, Australia

SERVICE AREA:

Western Australia

POPULATION SERVED:

Children and parents

FOUNDED:

2004

WEBSITE:

better-beginnings.com.au

The highly successful Better Beginnings program has been offered by the State Library of Western Australia since 2004, providing more than 500,000 families throughout the state with developmentally appropriate books and resources, as well as access to Rhyme Time and Story Time sessions at their local libraries.

The evidence-based approach adopted by the State Library through its ongoing evaluation of Better Beginnings, conducted by Edith Cowan University, has recently been supported by a Social Return on Investment Analysis, which revealed that for every \$1 invested there was a return of \$5.64 in social value.

The key to the success of the program is its strong alliances with funding partners Rio Tinto and local governments, as well as with its delivery partners' public libraries and community child health nurses.

The independent evaluation of the program by Edith Cowan University demonstrates the program's positive impact on the attitudes, behaviors and practices of parents around early literacy.

Better Beginnings gives parents a new insight into reading with their children and shows them how to have fun reading and teaching their children.

Today, Better Beginnings reaches over 60,000 families each year throughout Western Australia. By working together, libraries, child health nurses and schools provide every baby born in Western Australia and all kindergarten children and their families with a free picture book and literacy information, reinforcing the importance of shared reading and parental involvement. Thanks to the funding support of Rio Tinto, a pilot program reaching 2-year-olds and their families is providing a free picture book, nursery rhyme CD and nursery rhyme booklet, further encouraging families to read, sing, write, play and talk together.



READING INSTRUCTION & TUTORING

Quality of teaching has a profound impact on literacy achievement. But many teachers lack local access to the resources they need to increase literacy among their students.

Organizations that provide teachers with training, professional development, and high-quality instructional material improve the quality of reading instruction in the communities they serve. The Children's Literacy Initiative provides workshops to expand knowledge of literacy instruction, visits to model classrooms and on-the-job coaching. CommonLit provides teachers with free research-based instructional materials created by teachers and aligned to the Common Core State Standards. The Center for Teaching and Learning's internship programs provide teachers with effective models for teaching, interacting with children and collaborating with colleagues.

Tutoring is an especially effective method for teaching reading or helping someone to gain reading proficiency because its approach is not one-size-fits-all. The method enables the instructor to tailor the teaching to a student's particular needs.



According to a U.S. Department of Education study: "Research has shown that well-designed tutoring programs that use volunteers and other nonprofessionals as tutors can be effective in improving children's reading skills. Students with below-average reading skills who are tutored by volunteers show significant gains in reading skills when compared with similar students who do not receive tutoring from a quality tutoring program."⁸

Tutoring in literacy education can take on several forms. One can directly teach someone how to read, or one can tutor the tutor. This year's Best Practices honorees exhibit exemplary work in each method. ServeMinnesota trains other organizations in proper methods of reading instruction, and Reading Partners provides individualized instruction to students who are at below-grade-level reading proficiency.



QUALITY OF
TEACHING HAS A
PROFOUND IMPACT
ON LITERACY
ACHIEVEMENT



SERVEMINNESOTA



SERVEMINNESOTA

LOCATION:
Minneapolis

SERVICE AREA:
Minnesota

POPULATION SERVED:
Students from age 3 to grade 3

FOUNDED:
1994

WEBSITE:
serveminnesota.org

ServeMinnesota works with AmeriCorps members and community partners to meet critical needs throughout Minnesota. It focuses on solving tough problems in educational achievement, economic opportunity and environmental protection.

As the state’s administrator for federal AmeriCorps funds, ServeMinnesota provides grants to nonprofit organizations that have been selected to run an AmeriCorps program. ServeMinnesota provides training and technical assistance and monitors these organizations to ensure that they adhere to all federal rules and regulations related to their AmeriCorps grant.

Reading Corps was created to respond to the urgent need of early literacy failure and to build capacity within the educational system to incorporate data-based literacy instruction. Education policy leaders saw a consistent gap between literacy science and the capacity of Minnesota’s schools to effectively use proven research and tools to rapidly improve student proficiency rates. Reading Corps launched in a handful of Head Start centers in 2003 and has expanded to about 800 elementary schools, preschools and Head Start centers statewide. Scaling in Minnesota has brought Reading Corps to 77 of the state’s 87 counties.

Reading Corps, which is ServeMinnesota’s strategic initiative, provides a focused solution proven to quickly and inexpensively improve student reading outcomes. It creates a seamless system of literacy acquisition for students from age 3 to grade 3, readies preschoolers for the transition to kindergarten, helps students get on track to become proficient readers by the end of third grade and puts elementary-grade students on a trajectory toward a four-year college degree.

In 2012, ServeMinnesota began replication of Reading Corps in Colorado and Washington, D.C. Today, Reading Corps is serving more than 40,000 students in 12 states and Washington, D.C., reaching more than 220,000 children age 3 to grade 3 since its inception. Every year, the program receives additional requests from states and districts that want this proven model for their students.





READING PARTNERS

READING PARTNERS

LOCATION:
Oakland, CA

SERVICE AREA:
California, Colorado,
Washington, Minnesota,
North Carolina, Oklahoma,
South Carolina, Texas,
Maryland, New York and
Washington, D.C.

POPULATION SERVED:
K-4 students who are up to
2.5 years behind grade-level
reading

FOUNDED:
1999

WEBSITE:
readingpartners.org



Reading Partners mobilizes communities in 14 regions across the United States to provide students in under-resourced schools with the proven, individualized reading support they need to read at grade level by fourth grade. Reading Partners works with teachers and principals at local public elementary schools to identify students reading at least several months behind grade level and provide them with personalized literacy instruction in a dedicated “reading center” space at their school, helping them master the reading fundamentals they need to read on grade level.

Reading Partners’ trained, committed community volunteers work one-on-one with these students, delivering a simple, step-by-step, proven curriculum each week to help students begin to gain lost ground. Working one-on-one with their tutors, students who were once struggling in many subjects become proud, confident readers, excited about learning and ready for success.



Reading Partners is committed to ensuring that students gain the critical reading skills needed to prepare them for academic, professional and life success. At the core of its program model is the use of multiple data sources to monitor student progress and site quality and to evaluate program success. From student assessments and quality monitoring activities to researching the effectiveness of pilot initiatives and contracting for independent studies, Reading Partners systematically collects, analyzes and uses data to generate knowledge, improve programs and report on impacts.

Reading Partners assesses student reading skills three times during the year and formally surveys teachers twice each year to track each student’s progress and ensure high-quality programming. The assessment process enables staff to benchmark students’ reading levels at enrollment, modify instructional reading plans during the year and report gains at the end of the school year. In addition, volunteer tutors write observational notes after every tutoring session. Reading Partners’ site staff review the notes and use the information to provide additional instructional support and guidance for tutors throughout the year.



COMMONLIT



COMMONLIT

LOCATION:
Washington, D.C.

SERVICE AREA:
Nationwide

POPULATION SERVED:
Students in grades 5–12

FOUNDED:
2014

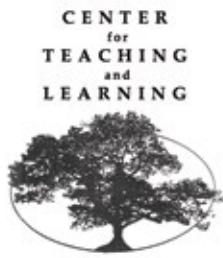
WEBSITE:
commonlit.org

CommonLit is a nonprofit that helps students develop advanced reading and writing skills through high-quality digital curriculum, real-time feedback and support for struggling readers. Today, CommonLit’s award-winning free online reading program is being used in over 30,000 schools nationwide. Seventy-three percent of schools served are low-income.

At CommonLit.org, teachers can access a free digital library of open educational resources for the fifth through 12th grades: poems, short stories, news articles, historical documents and excerpts from classic literature organized by themes that students love to discuss. CommonLit’s cutting-edge technology prompts students to interact with digital text, learn high-utility vocabulary words and respond to authentic inquiry questions using evidence from literature and history. “Guided Reading Mode” helps struggling readers and English language learners self-regulate their comprehension as they read. Finally, educators use CommonLit’s analytics dashboards to understand trends in literacy development, deliver more targeted instruction and keep parents informed about student progress. The result is a framework for reading, writing, thinking and discussion that drives student engagement and integrates seamlessly into any existing secondary literacy curriculum in English, science and social studies classrooms.

Because CommonLit is 100 percent free to teachers and students, it has seen broad adoption over the past year, with roughly 20,000 new teachers and students registering *per day*. Its rapid growth is a testament to the power of technology to bring a solution to scale and to the quality of the resources that CommonLit’s team of master teachers has built.





CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

LOCATION:
Edgecomb, ME

SERVICE AREA:
Maine

POPULATION SERVED:
K-8 students

FOUNDED:
1990

WEBSITE:
c-t-l.org

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING



The Center for Teaching and Learning is a K-8, low-tuition, independent demonstration school. Founded in 1990 by educator and Global Teacher Prize winner Nancie Atwell and certified by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, CTL has 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, serves a population of approximately 80 students and draws from over 20 towns and villages to create a close-knit community of mid-coast Maine families committed to excellence in education.



The school is known locally and nationally for its award-winning teaching, research-based methods, publications and other outreach to teachers across the United States and around the world, as well as for a program that engages students, challenges them and prepares them for life beyond CTL. So far, 97 percent of alumni have matriculated to colleges and universities.

CTL's innovative approach to reading instruction is grounded in its commitment to independent book reading. Students choose their own books, read them at school and home, and soar as readers, with remarkable gains in accuracy, stamina, habits and love of literature. The annual average for seventh and eighth graders is 40 titles each; in the primary grades, where picture books reign, the per-pupil average is in the hundreds.

Practices that support independent book reading include daily class time set aside for reading; teacher check-ins with each student; mini-lessons about authors and illustrators, genres, literary elements and decoding strategies; individualized assessment; bookbags to transport titles home and back; a newsletter about how parents can help; summer book loans and bookbags; and curated classroom libraries with 50 to 150 volumes per student. Two books, *In the Middle*, 3rd ed., by Nancie Atwell (Heinemann) and *The Reading Zone*, by Nancie Atwell and Anne Atwell Merkel (Scholastic) describe CTL's methods for inviting all children to read and love books.

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Christie Vilsack

Senior Adviser for International Education, U.S. Agency for International Development

Former first lady of Iowa, 1999-2007

Founder of the Iowa Center for the Book in the Iowa State Library, 2002





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¹ U.S. Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/>

² We Need Diverse Books, <http://weneeddiversebooks.org/mission-statement/>

³ The National Institute for Literacy

⁴ U.S. Department of Justice, Rand Report: "Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education"

⁵ National Bureau of Economic Research

²⁻⁵ Special thanks to ProLiteracy, <https://www.proliteracy.org/Resources/Adult-Literacy-Facts>

⁶ Ohio Literacy Resource Center, <http://literacy.kent.edu/FamilyLiteracy/whatisit.html>

⁷ Salisbury University–May Literacy Center, <http://www.salisbury.edu/seidel/mayliteracycenter/FamilyLit.html>

⁸ "Evidence that Tutoring Works," Educational Resources Information Center, 2001

The logo features the text 'LIBRARY OF CONGRESS' in a serif font, followed by 'LITERACY AWARDS' in a larger, bold serif font. A decorative flourish resembling a stylized leaf or scrollwork is positioned above the 'A' in 'AWARDS'. Below 'LITERACY AWARDS' is a horizontal line, and the year '2017' is written in a large, elegant script font.

LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS
LITERACY AWARDS
2017

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS LITERACY AWARDS

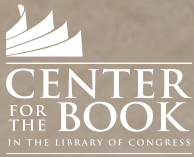
Through the generosity of David M. Rubenstein, the Library of Congress Literacy Awards Program honors organizations that have made outstanding contributions to increasing literacy in the United States or abroad. The awards also encourage the continuing development of innovative methods for promoting literacy and the wide dissemination of the most effective practices. They are intended to draw public attention to the continuing need for literacy services and to increase awareness of the importance of literacy. By recognizing current achievements, the awards seek to inspire organizations, foundations and other private sector groups to become involved in literacy promotion. The Library of Congress Literacy Awards Program is administered by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR THE BOOK

Since its creation by Congress in 1977 to “stimulate public interest in books and reading,” the Center for the Book (read.gov/cfb) has become a major national force for reading and literacy promotion. A public–private partnership, it sponsors educational programs that reach readers of all ages, both nationally and internationally. The center provides leadership for affiliated state centers for the book and nonprofit literacy and reading promotion partners and plays a key role in the Library’s annual National Book Festival. It also oversees the Library’s read.gov website and administers the Poetry and Literature Center.

ABOUT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Library of Congress is the world’s largest library, offering access to the creative record of the United States—and extensive materials from around the world—both on site and online. It is the main research arm of the U.S. Congress and the home of the U.S. Copyright Office. Explore collections, reference services and other programs and plan a visit at loc.gov, access the official site for U.S. federal legislative information at congress.gov and register creative works of authorship at copyright.gov.



www.Read.gov/LiteracyAwards



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www.loc.gov