



MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

READ Center Director Wins State Literacy Award

HAMPTON, VA – October 24, 2018 – Yesterday, READ Center Executive Director Karen La Forge was named the winner of the Virginia Literacy Foundation’s 2018 Nancy Jiranek Award.

The Virginia Literacy Foundation, which provides funding and technical support to private volunteer literacy organizations throughout the state, issues this award annually to individuals who exemplify the best in nonprofit management.

“It is an honor to be recognized by the Virginia Literacy Foundation with the Nancy Jiranek Award,” said La Forge. “It is a privilege to be part of The READ Center and support our students. They have great courage and commitment. It is rewarding to see them meet their goals and find success.”



Recipients are judged not only by their contributions to the field through their own programs but also by their collaborations with other organizations and “the strong impact of their work on their clients and within the community,” according to the award criteria.

La Forge was selected as this year’s recipient because of her work with The READ Center, an adult literacy program serving metro Richmond. The READ Center serves adults who read at 0-7 grade reading levels so they can improve their literacy skills including reading, writing, basic math, and digital skills. In metro Richmond about 1 in 10 adults lack basic literacy skills.

During her four years with the organization, The READ Center has increased the number of students served, added new programming like health and financial literacy, and doubled its revenue through grants, donations, sponsorships and special events. Also, The READ Center is seeking a new location for offices and classrooms to expand programs and services.

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The READ Center is a non-profit community-based organization that offers free classes and one-to-one tutoring for people aged eighteen and over who have low-level literacy skills. READ’s classes focus on reading and writing and integrate math and digital skills that are so vital to daily life in the 21st century. For more than 34 years, The READ Center has helped adults develop basic reading and communication skills, so they can better fulfill their roles as family members, workers, and members of the community. For more information about The READ Center visit, www.readcenter.org.