

# THE READ CENTER



Changing lives through adult literacy

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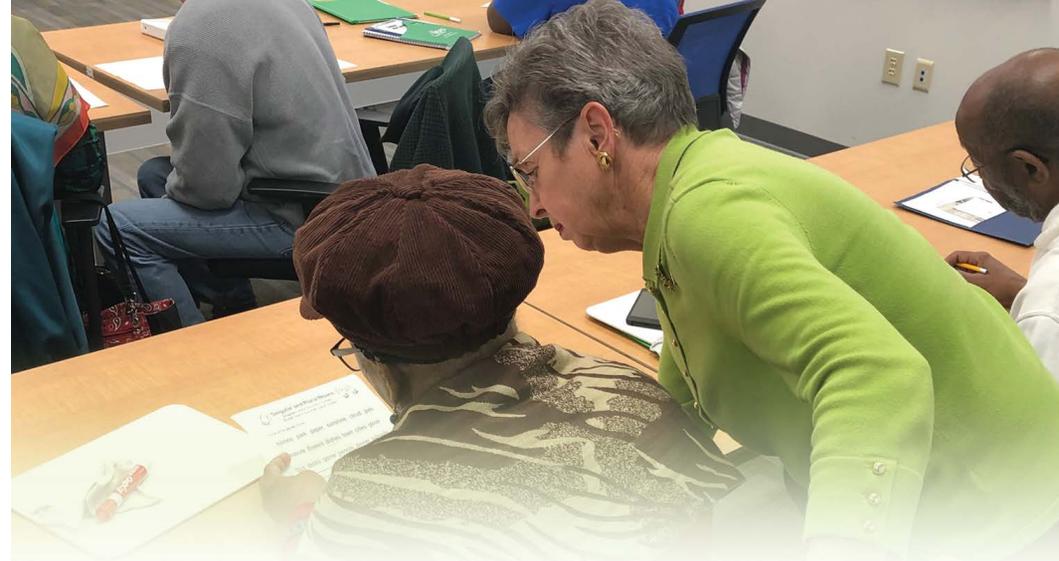
### From the President:

Thank you for being part of this critical mission, one that is very dear to my heart. Having grown up in a home where one of my parents was unable to read, I have seen the frustration and isolation felt by adults who struggle with low literacy. Through my involvement with The READ Center the past several years, I have also seen the transformative impact improved literacy can make for adults who seek READ’s services with the desire to be better employees, family members, and citizens.

The READ Center Board of Directors is proud to be working towards a community where all adults have a literate life. We are inspired to support students who completed 347 goals during the 2018-2019 academic year. We are honored to be part of the tireless network of staff and volunteers who contributed to 95% of surveyed students “liking their class” and evaluating it as “good for learning”. We are grateful for the generosity of donors who fund READ’s programs year over year, allowing students to grow and thrive.

On behalf of the Board, please allow me to convey our deep appreciation of your commitment to providing life-changing opportunities through literacy. Your investment paves the way for adults in our community to seek the skills they need to lead better and more hopeful lives.

—Nora N. Crouch,  
The READ Center Board President



### WHY THE READ CENTER?

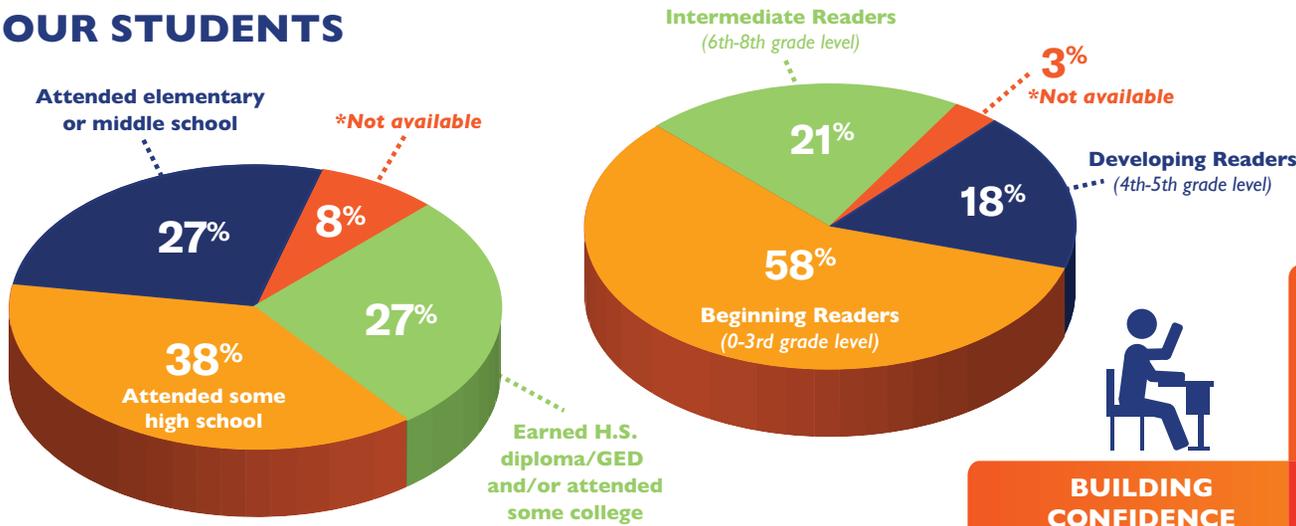
Literacy touches every aspect of our lives. Imagine holding two prescription bottles and not being able to read which one is yours and which belongs to your spouse. Imagine receiving a text confirming a job interview but not being able to reply. Imagine tucking in your child at night but not being able to read her a bedtime story. The ability to read, write, do basic math, and use a computer impacts a person’s health, employment, financial stability, housing, and community engagement. More than 10% of adults in the greater Richmond metro lack basic literacy skills. They struggle with everyday tasks we often take for granted, like being able to fill out a job application, read a bus schedule, or help children with homework.

The READ Center offers life-changing opportunities to adults seeking to improve their lives by improving their literacy. Basic literacy skills can lift adults out of poverty and low educational attainment, and provide the foundation for people to earn a living wage, manage their healthcare, and engage in their civic and social lives. Because of your support, adults in our community can reach goals they previously believed were impossible. Because of your dedication, we are creating a community in which all adults have a literate life.

### WHAT WE DO—THANKS TO YOU:

- **READ** provides small classroom instruction and one-to-one tutoring for adult learners.
- **READ** provides training and ongoing support for volunteer tutors to ensure students receive the most current and evidence-based education practices.
- **READ** builds instruction around students’ personal literacy and life goals. Learning is often most successful when the content is meaningful, inspiring, and personally relevant.
- **READ** connects the community by partnering with like-minded organizations to better serve students and offer literacy advancement opportunities to the public.

# OUR STUDENTS



*\*Completed number of hours to be considered a student but stopped out prior to testing or has not yet tested.*

**102**  
Tutors

**5,270**  
Hours

**89%**  
Tutor  
Retention Rate

## 2018-2019 Accomplishments:



### PROVIDING RESOURCES:

READ updated and expanded its library to include current materials that are grade-level and content-level appropriate.



### IMPROVING LITERACY

**READABLES**, developed by The READ Center, launched in early January. The health literacy booklets provided reading and writing activities focused on different topics like heart health and nutrition & exercise.



### DEVELOPING SKILLS

IXL—the online reading app that allows students to practice reading, math, and digital skills in and out of class—was a hit!

**READ students** logged **1,039 hours** and answered **156,231** questions.

*Stay tuned for updates on how you can help make a Home for READ a reality!*



### BUILDING CONFIDENCE

The READ Center Student Council (elected class representatives) met three times, developed a charter, and engaged fellow students by reporting on meetings and asking for their input.



### CHANGING LIVES

**150 people** were served: **115 students** attended classes and/or tutoring sessions.

**35 adults** attended READ community programs on financial literacy.

### A HOME FOR READ:

The READ Center has operated classrooms in donated space for more than 10 years. While we are deeply grateful to our in-kind donors, the Board of Directors and staff agree that the time has come to bring operations and instruction under one roof and create a true Home for READ. This new location will include 2-3 classrooms, a dedicated computer lab, space for 1:1 tutors to meet, a resource library, and offices for READ staff. It will allow READ to innovate and improve programming, build trust in the communities we serve, and grow relationships among students, tutors, and staff.

## 2019-2020 Goals:

- Provide literacy services to 150-200 adults in our community.
- Conduct a Student Awareness Campaign so that adults in need of literacy skills know about READ's classroom/tutoring programs as well as community programs offered to the public.
- Continue to update instructional resources by adding new books to READ's library, providing additional seats in IXL, and developing new READABLES on health, history, and community topics.
- Continue to build and support student engagement through student surveys and READ Student Council.
- Implement a Classroom Assistant pilot program to give READ students the opportunity to help their classmates and attend professional development training.



## Your support gives READ students the confidence to change their lives...

READ students are adults. They have life experience and opinions. They have personal goals they want to achieve as family members, employees, and citizens. As such, READ instruction is based around student goals and literacy skills they need to improve their lives. These skills include everything from learning fractions to cook a meal using a recipe, to achieving a job certification to fulfill a life-long career dream.

This past year, READ student Latoya celebrated the sweet success of completing one more step in her journey to becoming a Certified Nurse Aid. When LaToya first came to The READ Center, she was paired with volunteer tutor Linda, a retired Navy nurse. While working with Linda, Latoya graduated from the Virginia School for Nurses Aides with an "A" average. She then went on to pass the Virginia

State Board of Nursing examination and is determinedly working on her next certification. Because of your support, Latoya gained the skills and confidence she needed to improve her literacy and follow her passion to help others. Your gift to The READ Center goes beyond the gift of education, it's also the gift of hope, courage, and persistence READ students need to thrive and grow. It's a gift to our entire community.

*"Something I would like to learn to do is read a tape measure. There are lots of things around the house I can do on my own, but I can't do that. Knowing how to read a tape measure is very important, because with the wrong measurement your work will come out incorrect. Learning how to do those small and odd jobs around the house can make you feel pretty good about yourself."*—Harry

*"I have been going to the Read Center for a long time. I also work full time and work for myself. It gets hard, but when I get to class, I enjoy learning. I learned about fractions, phonics, and nutrition."*—J.C.

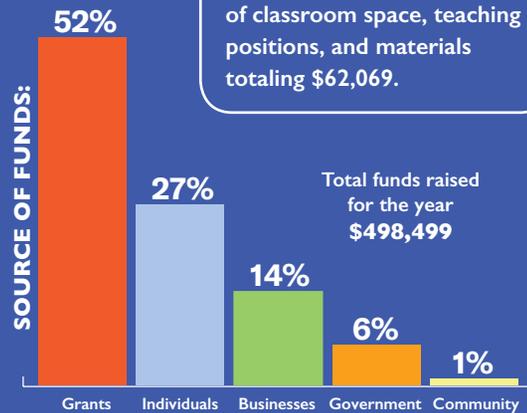
## FINANCIALS:



\*increase is due to a full-time Development Director salary

### In Kind Donations:

The READ Center is deeply grateful to our partners in literacy for in-kind donations of classroom space, teaching positions, and materials totaling \$62,069.

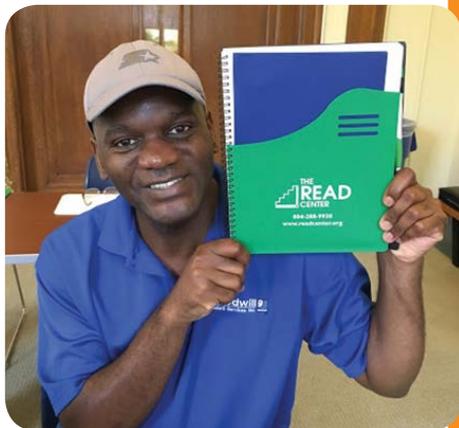


## SEE WHAT OUR STUDENTS ARE SAYING:

This year I am thankful for the gift of life, for the fact that I am alive and well. It's a blessing. I also have so many things I am grateful for this year. God has been so gracious to me and has put me in the midst of such wonderful people who have a hand in my success. This year I quit my job as a hair braider and didn't know what to do next. I thought there will be nothing I can do for work. At that time a friend of mine offered me a job. Above all I am thankful for my teachers and my tutors who take their time to teach with patience and kindness. I also want to say thank you to one person in particular, Michelle!!! AKA Miss Michelle! Who makes it a point to make sure I'm in class every day of the week, no complaints, no questions asked. I want to thank each and everyone of you here for dedicating your time and effort to the READ center. —**Marie**

My teacher's name is Janet. She works very hard to teach us how to read. She is very creative on getting material for us to learn. She has very good teaching skills. I learn so much from her classroom. She is one of the best teachers that I ever had. I want to say thank you Janet for all your hard work. And may God bless you. —**Kent**

I came into the country in 2014 and my English was weak since I never practiced. The Read Center has helped me improve in writing, pronouncing difficult words, reading long articles and helping me understand the message. The tutors are very understanding and helpful to the students. Being able to speak well has made it easier to blend in. I am able to talk to everyone and they understand me and I hope to keep improving so I can go back to school. —**James, from Kenya**



## THANK YOU FOR MAKING THIS WORK POSSIBLE.

Quite simply, The READ Center would not exist without your support. Because of your generosity, adults with low literacy can access the skills they need to turn their lives around. Your gift to The READ Center provides the tools for READ students to gain employment, get a driver's license, pass a job certification, use a computer more proficiently, increase involvement in their children's education, and attain citizenship. In fact, every goal just mentioned was achieved by one or more students this past year, thanks to your involvement.

In addition, your commitment helps READ students develop confidence and a sense of purpose that flows into every aspect of their lives, allowing them to experience new levels of self-esteem and dignity. On behalf of The READ Center Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and the students we serve, thank you.

**The READ Center appreciates each and every donation we receive. The Honor Roll of Donors is on The READ Center website, [readcenter.org](http://readcenter.org), under the News tab. Thank you again for changing lives!**