



Reading and Education for Adult Development

# Annual Impact Report 2023



# ABOUT US

The READ Center is a community-based nonprofit organization helping adults in Greater Richmond improve their lives through literacy.

READ provides classroom instruction, one-to-one tutoring, and community programs to adults who want to improve their reading, writing, basic math and digital skills.

READ Center Students are 18 years of age and older and are reading between a 0 to 8th grade equivalency level. Learning to read as an adult is complex, and our students have often had limited success in school.

*The READ Center meets students where they are and helps them attain their literacy and life goals.*

## THE READ CENTER STAFF

**Ryan Corrigan, Executive Director**

**Nausha Brown-Chavez, Advocacy Specialist**

**Chris Miller, Director of Programs**

**Josie Voorhies, Education Program Manager**

**Olivia Warner, Office Administrator**

**Carol Driskill, Teacher**

**Leslie Harper, Teacher & Tutor Trainer**

**Carolyn Harsh, Teacher & Tutor Trainer**

**Ava Hull, Teacher**

**Liz Scher, Teacher**

**Janet Sodell, Teacher & Tutor Trainer**

**Don Wilms, Teacher**

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for being a friend and supporter of the Read Center! Your continued support is vital to our mission! Thanks to you, our volunteers, our teachers, and our staff, we are continuing our important work providing literacy services to more and more Richmond area students. I told you last year of our goal to service at least 250 students during our July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 fiscal year, and am pleased to advise that we are working diligently to reach this goal. This would amount to a 100% increase from the last fiscal year in the number of students we are servicing. Rest assured that when we reach this goal (and we will), there will be no turning back or “resting on our laurels”. This milestone will only be the beginning of our efforts to implement our strategic plan to service enough students to make a real “dent” in the approximately 90,000 Richmonders who currently lack sufficient literacy skills. Once acquired, these skills will permit our students to function at their best--both at home and at work.

All Richmonders deserve a “literate life”! You are making this happen. Thanks again for helping to eradicate the challenges that inadequate literacy presents to far too many of our fellow Richmonders!

My very best,

Will Seymour, President of the Board

## 2022-2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**William F. Seymour, President**

**Ellen Marie Hess, Vice President**

**Kady Salmon, Vice President**

**Cassandra Reynolds, Secretary**

**Matthew Graves, Treasurer**

**Jordan Coles**

**Monique Finneran**

**Margaret Hill**

**James Lambert**

**Margaret Magee**

**Frank McCormick**

**Terry McNally**

**Janet Palmer**

**Ida Pierce**

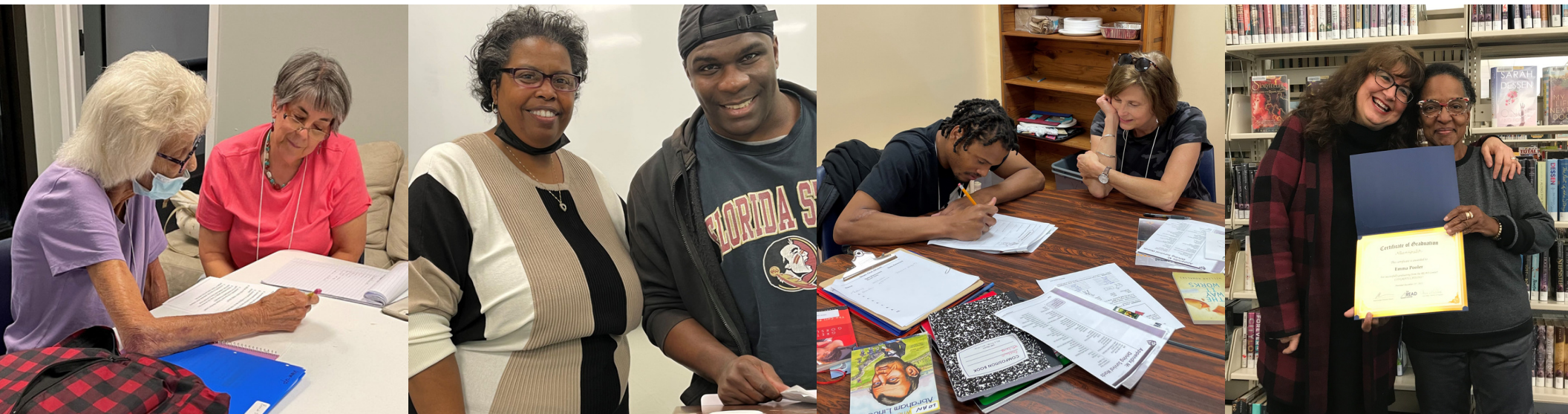
**Lisa Tully**

**Michael Walsh**



## In Fiscal Year 2022-23...

- The READ Center reached **173** adult learners.
- **114** students received literacy instruction
- Over **8,741 HOURS** of instruction were provided through classes and one-to-one tutor pairs.
- **188** personal student goals were met (ex: using email on a smartphone)
- **115** volunteer tutors provided over **6,063 HOURS** of classroom and individual literacy tutoring and support.
- **3** students graduated from The READ Center



## Digital Literacy Skills

The READ Center provided **over 290 hours** of digital skills classes to students

In these classes, volunteers provided **122 hours** of support.

Digital skills taught included:

- Basic computer skills
- Using a mouse & keyboard
- Using a smart phone
- Using the internet safely



## Volunteer Tutor Spotlight: Deborah Miller

Getting to know the amazing students, staff, instructors and volunteers at the READ Center has been such a gift. When a student with whom I worked closely moved from Don's class to Ava's class, I was able to move with him so that we could continue to work together. His enthusiasm and joy inspire me every week.

One of the highlights of my READ Center experience was the trip in February to the General Assembly with two of Don's classes. Our local elected officials and their assistants were able to meet some of the students and hear first-hand about their journeys and the ways their lives are being transformed by learning to read. What a gift The READ Center is to our community!

## End-of-Year Celebration of Learning

We got to celebrate an incredible year of learning in-person for the first time since COVID with 148 attendees.

Students were recognized for their academic efforts & achievements.

We are so proud to have three students graduate from READ's program!





# STUDENTS

## READ STUDENTS LIVE IN...

Other (Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Hanover, Petersburg)

10%

Chesterfield County

18%

Henrico County

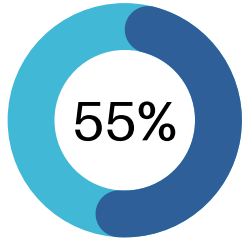
23%

Richmond City

49%

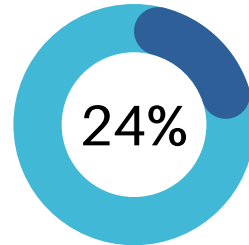


## READING LEVELS



Reading at or below a 3rd-grade level

Reading between a 4th-8th grade level



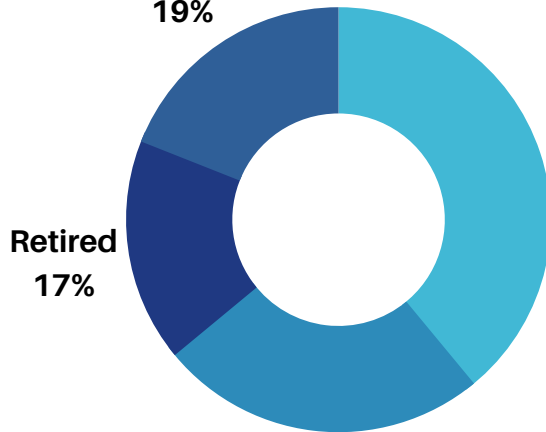
24%



40% of READ students have a high school diploma or equivalent

## EMPLOYMENT

Other  
19%



Employed  
39%

Unemployed  
25%

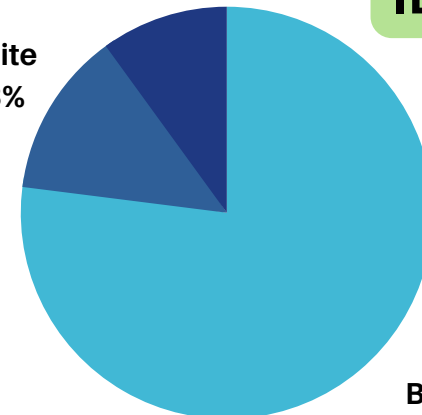
Retired  
17%

40% of READ students are over 60 years old

## RACIAL IDENTITY

Other  
10%

White  
13%



Black/African-American  
77%

In 2023, The READ Center made a start in the advocacy space.

We introduced the First Annual Adult Literacy Advocacy Month in February.

Some initiatives & achievements were...

## Student Advocacy Campaign

Students & tutors visited the General Assembly and met with delegates & their staff to discuss the experience and challenges of an adult literacy student.

## Local Support

The City of Richmond proclaimed February 9 as The READ Center's 'Adult Literacy Advocacy Day' Thanks to a letter writing campaign & other advocacy efforts, READ was included in the city budget for program funding.

## Legislative Recognition

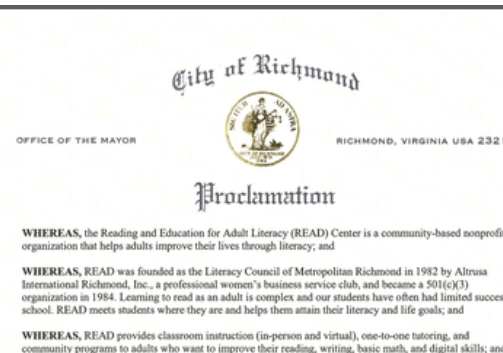
READ was recognized in the Virginia State Senate by Senator Hashmi.

Over the summer, several state legislators made visits to READ to meet & hear from students.

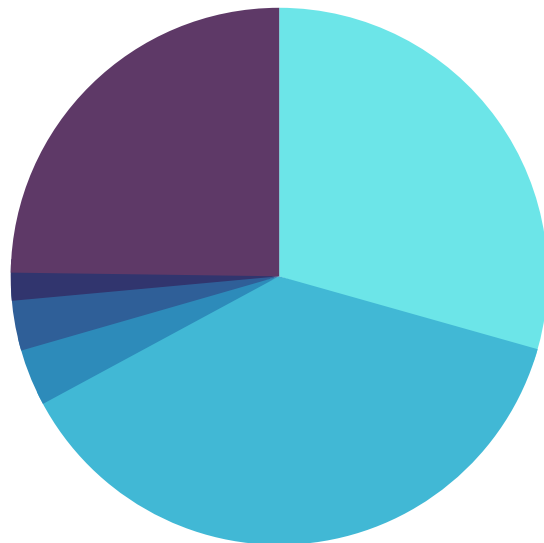
For the Spring Edition of the Student Voice, a publication for & by READ students, we asked students to share their thoughts on the importance of advocating for adult literacy for themselves, their families and the community at large.

“To me, advocating for adult literacy is number one in my life. Education is freedom. Education is independence. It's also having self esteem and a sense of self worth.  
-Marie-

“I advocate for literacy for my 7 year old daughter who I'm helping learn to read as well as for myself who also struggles with reading and writing. Literacy is power!! Reading helps you learn and succeed and it's a skill we need in everyday life.  
-Lavonda-

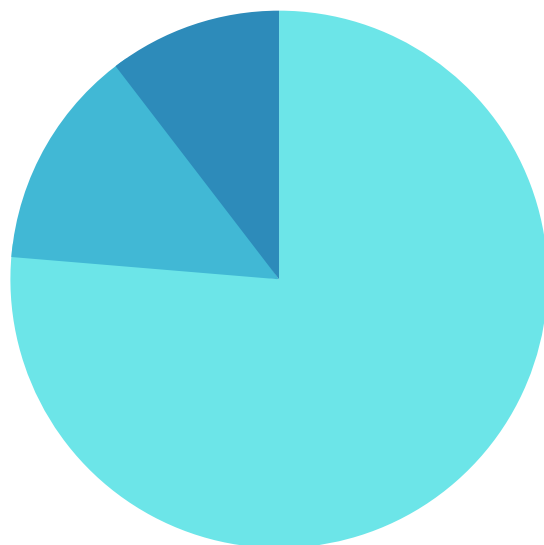


# FINANCIALS



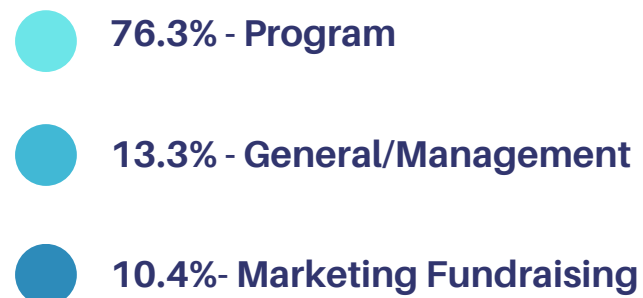
**TOTAL: \$665,355**

## REVENUE



**TOTAL: \$659,530**

## EXPENSES





Dear Friends of READ,

The largest challenge in creating an Annual Impact Report is being able to objectively look at the past fiscal year in review and share what we feel are the “highlights”, or the most important things that the organization has accomplished. The READ Center has had so many things to put a flashlight on this year that our biggest challenge in writing a retrospective is in not forgetting all we can share with pride. As we grew our efforts in advocacy and invited several delegates and Senator Hashmi to visit with our students, we were able to thoughtfully have our voice be heard by legislators regarding the importance of serving our very deserving population in need of literacy support. We were recognized on the Senate Floor as an essential organization in the fight against low literacy. Our program team forged a new path forward that will allow all our students to be successful in their individual journeys towards a more literate if not well-rounded life. The Trivia Bee, one of our most popular special events, returned after a too long hiatus and was met with resounding success with over 250+ people in attendance.

As I said, too many amazing things to recount for an organization humbled by the resiliency of its’ students, in awe of the courage it takes to grow. We share this Annual Impact Report with pride in the strides we have taken as an organization and humility in the knowledge of what has yet to be accomplished. For the more than 90,000 people in metro Richmond who need our support, we are happy to continue this journey with our amazing students, our respectful board, and you.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan Corrigan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ryan" being more prominent than the last name "Corrigan".

Ryan Corrigan, Executive Director

**THANK YOU**

*For every financial contribution, gift of time & energy, and word of encouragement.*

*We couldn't do it without you!*



Reading and Education for Addult Development

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