



**CITY OF MONROVIA
LIBRARY BOARD
AGENDA REPORT**



DEPARTMENT: Community Services
Library Division

MEETING DATE: October 27, 2022

PREPARED BY: Jade Mushisky,
Literacy Coordinator

AGENDA LOCATION: AR-1

TITLE: 2021/2022 Literacy Services Update

OBJECTIVE: To update the Library Board on the status of Literacy Services.

BACKGROUND:

Monrovia Public Library's Adult Literacy Services aims to help English-speaking adults improve their reading and writing skills so that they can reach their potential as workers, parents, community members, and life-long learners. With the help of trained volunteer tutors, learners meet with their paired tutor for one-on-one sessions or participate in the book club and conversation classes.

Our goals-oriented program operates under the guidance of California Library Literacy Services (CLLS). It was developed in 1984 as the first statewide library-based adult literacy service. Since then, library literacy programs have helped more than a quarter of a million learners and their families with their literacy goals. Monrovia Public Library's Literacy Services believes that literacy is more than just reading and writing. For nearly 20 years, the Adult Literacy Services program at Monrovia Public Library has helped adult learners achieve their goals and build better lives for themselves and their families.

UPDATE:

Tutors/Learners

Since July 2021, there has been 18 learners served in the program who completed at least one learning goal. In addition, three tutors have completed tutor training or began the onboarding process, and seven learners have been added to the program since July 2021. Currently, the program has eight tutors meeting with 12 learners and two tutors facilitating the two small groups for learners. Between July 2021 and June 2022, tutors have volunteered 468 hours to the Literacy Program. Based on calculations by the Independent Sector in Washington, DC, the current value of volunteers is rated at \$29.95 an hour, a value of about \$14,016.60

Every learner enters the program with a goal which may include obtaining a high school diploma or passing the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET), building vocabulary and communication skills for work and life, improving job skills such as writing reports and reading charts to get a better job, and increasing confidence to communicate with others outside of their homes and communities. Of particular note, learner goals completed during this time period include receiving a Green Card, becoming a Recreation Leader, publicly presenting a project on Zoom, applying for and moving into their own apartment, gaining employment in a medical office, and successfully navigating official court instructions while serving for jury duty.

Tutor/Learner Support

2021

- Summer- Winter: Literacy provided the ongoing *Culture & Conversation* Group virtually. This group supports learners who want to explore reading, pronunciation, and modern American culture.
- September: Staff launched a Family Literacy program, which consisted of 20 take-home book and activity kits to encourage families to read and practice literacy together and to celebrate *Adult Education and Family Literacy Week*.
- October: Staff attended and supported a learner's published book presentation at an author's panel for the Traveling Vietnam Memorial hosted by Corona Public Library.
- November: Staff provided a virtual program titled *Relax into Writing*, which shared ideas about taking care of one's body while writing, reading, or sitting for long periods. This was led by an independent adult literacy consultant, certified yoga teacher, and writing workshop facilitator.
- December: Staff provided a family literacy program titled *Happy Reading Together*, a take-home kit which encouraged families to read together to help their child develop early literacy skills, as well as encouraging families to craft together to help their child develop fine motor skills, boost self-esteem, and encourage self-expression

2022

- Winter 2022-present: Literacy provided the ongoing *Culture & Conversation* Group in a hybrid model. This group supports learners who want to explore reading, pronunciation, and modern American culture.
- February: Staff hosted *Recipes to Remember*, a virtual recipe and memory share to support learners in their reading, writing, and pronunciation goals.
- April: Staff provided a family literacy program for 30 families to share during MUSD's spring break period. This take-home kit encouraged families to read together to help their child develop early literacy skills, as well as encouraging families to craft together to encourage self-expression and creativity.
- June: Staff provided a *Financial Literacy Program* where participants could learn how to protect their personal and financial information with an Education & Outreach Specialist from the California Department of Financial Protection & Innovation.
- June: Book Club returned with hybrid (Zoom and in-person) meetings every second and fourth Monday of the month.

Technology & Materials Support

Literacy Services has continued in a hybrid virtual/in-person space, and staff has conducted ongoing technology training to learners, tutors, and other library volunteers to enable more participants to join virtual or hybrid literacy program offerings.

- The book club, the conversation group, the one-to-one tutoring, new learner assessments, and tutor training opportunities are mostly conducted online via Zoom to best fit the scheduling needs of learners and tutors as well as to respect any health concerns they may have related to in-person meetings.
- Staff continues to offer tech training for all volunteer tutors and learners. Tech training enables more participants to join literacy programs and for volunteers to provide literacy services.
- Staff provides technology equipment as needed to ensure all members of the program have the items they need to engage in virtual programming and training.

- All literacy services and volunteer trainings are offered virtually in one-on-one or small group meetings as well as via phone to meet the individual needs of each learner and tutor.

Literacy Services continues to provide materials for new and struggling readers, and this includes access to new materials such as the *Fresh Reads* collection located in the library lobby and updated literacy materials for tutors and learners.

- *Fresh Reads* is a collection of quick and easy reads for adults looking for non- intimidating novels and nonfiction titles. The collection removes the stigma of illiteracy and is instead promoted as convenient for new adult readers and for those with hectic schedules in search of a quick read.
- *Citizenship & Civics Corner* is a dedicated space to support learners with US Citizenship as a Literacy goal. The Citizenship Corner includes resources for learners interested in studying for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration exams, and includes books, flashcards, workbooks, DVD's, voter registration forms, and more.

The Literacy Center loans laptops and iPads, as well as Chromebooks, Wi-Fi hotspots, tutor camera accessories, and phone and tablet stands to facilitate learners in the hybrid virtual learning process. In order to continue to deliver quality hybrid online services such as tutor training, learner programs, and family literacy classes, the Literacy Center's Logitech video conferencing system allows for clear video and audio for online participants. This system is mobile, and it enables staff to create virtual classrooms anywhere in the library. Literacy technology equipment is provided by funds from the Monrovia Public Library Foundation.

Program Funding

The State of California provides annual CLLS grant funding for adult literacy programs across the state. In 2021/2022, they awarded Monrovia \$27,029 for the Adult Literacy Services program and \$48,600 for the Family Literacy Services program. The grand total for Adult Literacy Services and Family Literacy Services for 2021/2022 was \$75,629. Grant funds are used to offset staffing costs. Additional funds for materials and equipment are provided by the Monrovia Public Library Foundation.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Library Board move to receive and file AR-1 2021/2022 Literacy Services Update.

LIBRARY BOARD ACTION REQUIRED: If the Library Board concurs, the appropriate action would be a motion: **Receive and file report AR-1 2021/2022 Literacy Services Update.**