



LITERACY COUNCIL OF THE BLACK HILLS

Encourage. Educate. Empower.

2023 Annual Report

January - December 2023

Prepared by Veronica Durand, Program Coordinator

Our Mission: Literacy Council of the Black Hills is a volunteer based 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization providing free, individualized tutoring and group conversation classes in English to help people meet their personal goals and enhance their contributions to the community.

What we do: We train volunteers and provide adults with free individualized tutoring in basic reading, writing and speaking, and we hold conversation classes for English language learners.

Demographics:

- Employees: 1 part-time Program Coordinator
- Volunteers: 67 active volunteers/ 6 inactive volunteers
- Volunteer tutoring hours (January through December 2023): 2256
- Total non-tutoring hours (January through December 2023): 2762
- Total volunteer hours (January through December 2023): 5018
- Total students served: 90
- Tutored ESL students: 90 (100%)
- Tutored ABE students: 0
- Tutored female students: 66 (73%) Tutored male students: 24 (27%)
- Countries of origin: 21 Bangladesh, Brazil, Burma, China, Columbia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Puerto Rico, Peru, Russia, Thailand, Ukraine, United States, Venezuela, Vietnam
- Number of individually tutored students who have children under the age of 18: 25

Student Goals (out of 87 individually-tutored students):

- Improve work or school related reading and writing: 25%
- Improve English conversation: 83%
- Become a citizen of the United States: 26%
- Obtain a library card and check out materials: 43%
- Obtain a driver's license: 29%
- Interact with teachers: 38%
- Get a job or better job: 32%
- Become involved in community activities: 21%
- Obtain a license or certificate: 15%
- Write a resume/prepare for job interview: 10%
- Read a book to a child/help with homework: 15%
- Health education/reading medication labels: 44%
- Write checks/pay bills: 22%
- Perform job tasks better: 14%

Community Resources:

Rapid City Public Library provides phone referrals, shelf space for curriculum materials, and provides space for tutoring, training, meetings, and events.

Career Learning Center shares resources, provides feedback, and offers referrals for those of low reading levels (0 to 8th grade reading, writing and speaking), and for learners who can only meet at off hours or need extra help outside of Career Learning Center hours.

Blessed Sacrament Church offers financial support, meeting location and referrals for their large Hispanic congregation.

Rapid City Area Schools serves children, an area of literacy council interest in serving family literacy.

Supporting Organizations:

United Way

ProLiteracy

Dollar General

John T. Vucurevich Foundation

Black Hills Area Community Foundation

Training and Assessment

- Use of goals sheets for each student; achievement of individual goals reviewed bi-annually
- Online self-paced training through ProLiteracy; in-person tutor training provided by Literacy Council of the Black Hills for new tutors and on-going development
- Student placement assessment that align with the curriculum materials
- On-going evaluation at monthly Board meetings and committee meetings

Highlights for 2023:

- Post-Covid we were able to successfully resume in-person tutoring, Tutor Training and Conversation Classes.
- Tutor Training held in March, June, and September. Thirty-one new tutors trained. (90% retained)
- Thirty-one new students registered for tutoring.
- Habitat for Humanity provided space for the Conversation Class during the Rapid City Library remodel.
- Conversation Class: Fifty-one students attended a class. Average attendance monthly was ten.
- Program Coordinator and/or Board Members met with 11 Community Organizations.
- Program Coordinator spoke at BNI - Elevated Connections and the Cosmopolitan Club
- Program Coordinator and/or Board Members & Volunteers had informational tables at the Community Service Connections Annual Meeting, United Way Gala, Black Hills Energy Nonprofit Showcase, Rural America Initiative Resource Fair, Lattes & Literacy (Alternative Fuel, Pure Bean, Essence of Coffee, Koyote Koffee, Ziggi's Coffee)
- Black Hills Blend and Creative Bean Coffee put Literacy Council Stickers on their cups during November for Lattes & Literacy.
- Annual Picnic on September 10 for Literacy Day; over 90 attended. Several students shared their writing to demonstrate their growth in literacy skills.
- Hauge Broadcasting selected the Literacy Council as "Heart of the Hills" for October. Public Service Announcements ran throughout October.
- NewsCenter1 did a Connect With Us segment in December. Filming was done during a Conversation Class.