



2021 TLA graduates Nyi, Canidance, and Adam

Student Spotlight: Canidance

Hello, my name is Canidance. I am a 34-year-old mother of three wonderful children who have inspired me to get back into school and further my dreams into the nursing field. I was born and raised in Fort Wayne with dreams of traveling the world someday. I have been a CNA for the last 13 years, and for the past four years, I have worked in a hospital. I'm thankful to be able to take care of others.

"To anyone out there who is struggling, I would say to always believe in yourself and push through it."

I decided to apply myself at The Literacy Alliance because of my oldest son, a freshman at Hocking College. Seeing him off to the next step of life made me realize that I have not been standing on what I have been teaching him his whole life, which is the importance of education. I gave birth to my son at the age of 16, and it kept me from finishing school. However, with his encouragement and belief in me, I will get my high school equivalency diploma.

This experience has been wonderful for me and having a teacher who believes in you makes it even better.

After obtaining my high school equivalency diploma, I plan to go right into college, praying to enroll in the nursing program that will get me to be a registered nurse one day.

As a student here at The Literacy Alliance, I truly appreciate the hard work and strong words of encouragement that the teachers show. Without that, I do believe I would have given up. To anyone out there who is struggling, I would say to always believe in yourself and push through it.

Canidance achieved her goal and obtained her high school equivalency diploma

in September 2021. She plans to enroll in college for the spring semester and start her journey towards her RN. We are proud of Canidance and know she will accomplish everything planned and continue pushing through adversity to realize her goals.



Your gifts are helping more of our neighbors like Canidance. You can read more stories on our blog.

literacyalliance.org/blog

Donor Spotlight: Mary McDonald

What is your name and line of work?

My name is Mary McDonald. I am a retired corporate planner and market researcher for Lincoln Financial Group.

What is your affiliation with The Literacy Alliance, and how long?

Soon after our retirements, my husband and I volunteered for a former TLA program in which books were read to small groups of preschoolers at several central city day care centers. We loved sharing beautiful books with these curious and enthusiastic children.

During this time, I was invited to join the TLA board, serving for six years (including two as board president) during the tenure of executive director Judy Stabelli, whose steady, guiding hand for more than 20 years built a solid foundation for The Literacy Alliance.

Why do you choose to support TLA financially?

Supporting TLA financially over the past 16 years is the best way I know to contribute to improved life paths and opportunities for these motivated students, many of whom are struggling in difficult life circumstances.



Visit literacyalliance.org/blog to read more of Mary's donor experience and learn how you can join our Honor Roll as a monthly donor!



Double your donation. Double your impact!

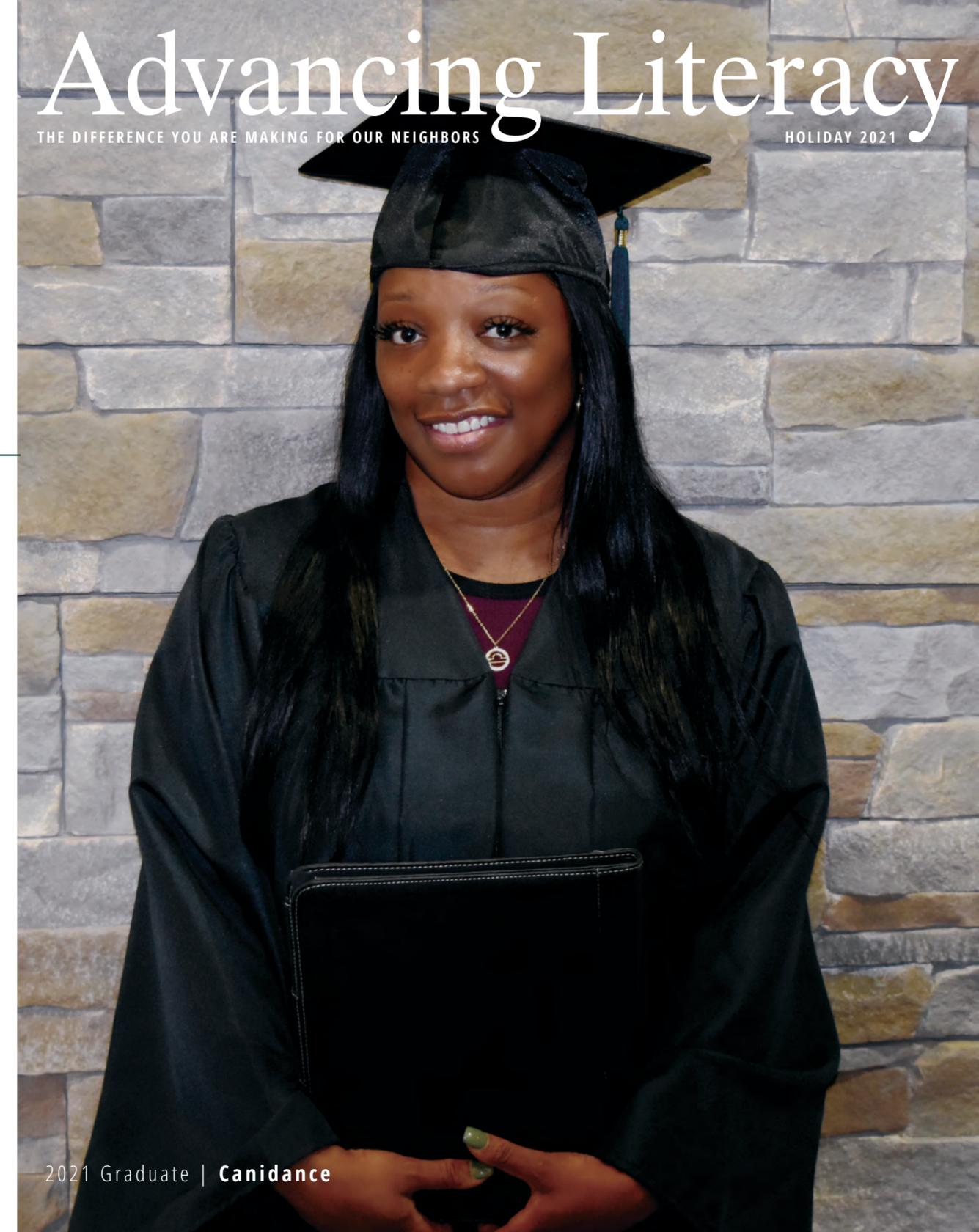
Your support will go even further this season! Two generous donors have funded a challenge grant that will match all donations, dollar for dollar, up to \$10,000 if received before December 31, 2021.

Donate today at literacyalliance.org/donate or call (260) 423-0001.

Advancing Literacy

THE DIFFERENCE YOU ARE MAKING FOR OUR NEIGHBORS

HOLIDAY 2021



2021 Graduate | Canidance

Mission

The Literacy Alliance strives to end illiteracy by teaching students through learning centers, literacy programs, and tutoring services that empower individuals to succeed at work, at home, and in the community.

2021-22

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Volunteer Spotlight: Evert Mol



As a longtime advocate for youth education in the Fort Wayne area, Evert Mol has been volunteering with The Literacy Alliance for two years. Previously, his passion for student success led him to volunteering as a math tutor in local high schools. Prior to his current volunteer position, he volunteered with Project READS along with his wife and feels that it's "really important to get third graders to grade level before they go on."

“The most rewarding element of volunteering with TLA has been seeing someone get their diploma.”

A retired engineer, Evert understands the need to help others who sometimes find math difficult. Working with motivated adults in a location convenient to his home, he has continued to make an impact. The most rewarding element of volunteering with TLA has been "seeing someone get their diploma." Evert recognizes the significant impact this has on our student's lives as well as the community. He is often amazed by the accomplishments of our students as they push themselves toward victory.

Evert not only volunteers with TLA, but is a financial supporter as well. He chooses to donate because "Coming back later in life can be difficult. Anyone willing to put in the time and effort required to pass the equivalency test deserves all the help we can provide."

Do you have time to invest in your community? The Literacy Alliance has many volunteer opportunities. Give us a call at (260) 426-7323 or visit literacyalliance.org/volunteer for more information on how you can get involved.

Did You Know?

There is no cost to students for our programs! It is one of the many ways you are helping remove barriers for learners in Allen, Adams, and Wells counties. Please consider investing in the future of our communities by visiting our website, literacyalliance.org/donate, or by using the enclosed return envelope to give the gift of literacy.

Project READS Up and Running in Person at Area Schools

The Literacy Alliance is excited about its new addition: Project READS (Reading, Early Assistance in Developing Skills). COO Brian Schlichtenmyer has been working with Project READS staff members Deb Dutton and JC York through the transition and is pleased with both the logistical and programmatic progress that has been made. So far, seven sites are up and running with five pending and 35 children are being served.

Brian believes that "adding early reading to TLA's menu of instructional services allows a more comprehensive approach to illiteracy in the community. We help children at the beginning of their educational journey to complete that journey successfully. We help adults reach success through high school equivalency attainment and workforce preparation. TLA is now able to affect change at both ends of the educational continuum."

Though TLA has served children indirectly in the past through Read to Me (RTM) and Families Learning Together (FLT), we are now able to serve and directly impact reading skills as early as possible. In FLT, TLA directly provided adult instruction to parents while the children received early education from a partner agency. We targeted parents of preschool-age children through the RTM programs, encouraging those parents to read to their children every day for 20 minutes.

Project READS (PR) program director Deb Dutton has been working with schools to get back to in-person programming and says, "I believe the schools have looked at us in a whole new way since the beginning years of PR as being a real resource for help in the language arts area for students. We have had teachers and school staff tell us that their students

have learned to love reading and that they don't look at PR as something they have to do after school to get better at reading, but want to do. We have strived to make Project READS academically focused but also fun and engaging so that students are still learning but don't necessarily realize they are when having fun at the same time, plus they get a tutor/mentor who is truly invested in them."



She continues, "We had a student whose parents each worked 60+ hours a week. He was the oldest child in the family with way more responsibilities than a 2nd grader should have. When he started PR he said he didn't like school and hated reading because he wasn't good at it and he didn't have time to learn stuff because he needed to take care of his little brothers. Taking care of his little brothers included feeding them dinner, entertaining them until bedtime and getting them off to bed. After a few months in PR, he started to move up a few reading levels and became more interested in stories we provided and really liked working with his tutor, whom he started to trust and open up to. His teacher told us he was doing better, not only in behavior and attitude, but also in his academics all around. He actually started looking forward to coming to school, especially on PR days. We feel that PR helped him find some happiness and perhaps gave him time to just be a kid himself and have someone take time to really listen to him and focus on his needs for a change. It became a pleasure for him to learn more, rather than another responsibility or another chore he had to get through."

Deb's favorite thing about Project READS, "is watching when our students get the ah-ha moments and the light bulb turns on, they find reading not only fun and enjoyable but also find success in other areas of their academics. We have seen students do a total turnaround. It's an amazing process to watch unfold!"

Student Spotlight: Rui



My name is Rui and I am 51 years old. I come from northeast China. I have two brothers and one sister. I live with my son, Jack, and my husband, Robert.

I have been in Indiana for 12 years. I graduated from college in China 18 years ago. My English was not good, so I came to The Literacy Alliance in January 2020 to improve my English. I like to study here. We have the best teachers. There is no free adult school in China, so I enjoyed the resources.

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I hope everyone can get an education as we are, get a good job, and gain the best skills to give back to the public. I would like to open my own business someday.

Rui has made significant advances in her English language skills since coming to TLA. In fact, in late June 2021, Rui passed the high school equivalency exam (HSE).



Rui has since enrolled at Ivy Tech, and is pursuing accounting. We are very proud of everything she's accomplished and can't wait to see what she will achieve next!

TLA Staff

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