



# 2024-25 Impact Report

### **Mission Statement**

Literacy changes lives. Our mission is to empower people and strengthen community through education.

### **Values Statement**

We put learners at the center of everything we do, guided by respect, trust, and belief in the power of opportunity. Every choice we make opens new pathways to literacy, education, and a brighter future.

### **Vision Statement**

Our future is one where The Literacy Alliance drives generational change through education, serving as a catalyst for transformation across the region.

Dear Friends,

At The Literacy Alliance, we believe every person deserves the chance to unlock their potential through education. This past year has proved that literacy does more than teach reading and writing, it changes lives, strengthens families, and fuels thriving communities.

This was a year of resilience. While we navigated shifting landscapes in state and federal funding, we were inspired by how our community rallied around our mission. From the joy shared at *Laughs for Literacy* to the inspiration of *A Night at the Library*, you reminded us that this work is about connection, confidence, and hope.

Because of you, we met rising demand with open doors and open hearts. Thank you to every supporter, past, present, and future, for standing with us. Your generosity fuels opportunity, ensuring that literacy remains a pathway to transformation for generations to come.

With gratitude,



Melinda Haines  
Chief Executive Officer  
melinda@literacyalliance.org  
(260) 423-0001



Isabel Nuñez  
Chair, Board of Directors

# 614

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS  
SERVED IN 2024-2025

# 187

PROJECT GRADUATE STUDENTS SERVED

# 71%

OF PROJECT GRADUATE STUDENTS  
MADE OVERALL ACADEMIC GAINS

# 22%

OF PROJECT GRADUATE STUDENTS  
EARNED THEIR HSE DIPLOMA

# 270

PROJECT CONNECT STUDENTS SERVED

# 65%

OF PROJECT CONNECT STUDENTS MADE  
OVERALL ACADEMIC GAINS

# 107

PROJECT READS STUDENTS SERVED

# 100%

OF PROJECT READS STUDENTS  
IMPROVED THEIR READING LEVEL



TLA Students in a digital literacy class.

## Program Outcomes

# 2024-25 HSE Graduates

The accomplishments of our Project Graduate students are nothing short of inspiring. They took the hardest step—the first one—and in doing so, unlocked potential they always possessed. We are reminded of Ralph Waldo Emerson’s words: “What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.” We celebrate the strength within our students and look forward to seeing what they achieve next.

Olivia Archer  
Jadyn Bannister  
Hayden (Scotty) Boggs  
Chase Campbell  
Cheyenne Cook  
Hanna Coonrod  
Cody Costello  
Yadir Del Cid  
Jenna Dever  
Isabella Feigel  
Angel Fuller  
Brianna Garvin  
Alberto Gonzalez  
Esther Graber

Jersie Harless  
Raynisha Henneghan  
Desmond James  
Zachary Jividen  
Jacob Johnson  
Ayden May  
Sebastian McQueen  
Jaeden Payton  
Antron Pearson  
Charles Phelps  
Roman Recker  
Seth Robinson  
Adonis Robinson  
Jacob Rogers

Kersten Schuchman  
Kaitlyn Marie Schwartz  
Rhoda Schwartz  
Emily Schwartz  
Jolene Shutt  
Jonathan Stickney  
Shauncey Studabaker  
Ruth Troyer  
Ariana Tryon  
Eratee Tsakas  
Lily West  
James Wise  
Lucas Yoder  
Hunter Young



# 68

ADULT EDUCATION  
PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

# 3,211

ADULT EDUCATION  
SERVICE HOURS

# 125

PROJECT READS VOLUNTEERS

# 2,291

PROJECT READS SERVICE HOURS

# 193

TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

# 5,502

TOTAL SERVICE HOURS  
2024-2025 PROGRAM YEAR

## Volunteer Impact

The Literacy Alliance volunteers were a driving force in the 2024-2025 program year, contributing 5,502 hours of service. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, this time represents a value of **\$127,646\***. Key impacts included:

**Project Graduate:** 3,211 hours dedicated to helping adults reach educational goals.

**Project Reads:** 2,291 hours working with elementary students, resulting in **100%** of participants advancing by at least four reading levels.

From board service and office assistance to one-on-one tutoring, our volunteers are more than just helpers. They are mentors and motivators making a tangible investment in our students' and community's futures.

*\*According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the mean hourly wage for adult tutors in Indiana is \$23.20, while the national mean hourly wage is \$23.36 per hour.*



Adult Education  
Gordon Cole Volunteer of the Year 2025

**Deb Morse**



Project Reads  
Toma T. Davis Volunteer of the Year 2025

**Whitney Weber**



Rosalina Perez and Mo Vergara in *Tomás and the Library Lady*



Artist America Carrillo at *A Night at the Library*



Comedian Dan Brown at *Laughs for Literacy!*

**\$45,227**

NET REVENUE RAISED  
THROUGH FUNDRAISING EVENTS

We kicked off the 2024-25 fundraising year in September with Laughs for Literacy! Hosted by WANE TV's Dirk Rowley and featuring comedians Cyrus Steele and Dan Brown, the evening was one to remember. It was more than just entertainment; the event united us behind our shared goal of improving literacy, proving that humor can bring a community together to support impactful work.

In February, we reunited with Arena Dinner Theatre for a milestone event: our first-ever bi-lingual production, *Tomás and the Library Lady*. Based on an inspiring true story, the production was made even more meaningful by the cast itself. Two of our own Project Connect students, Brenda Juarez and Angel Narvaez, took the stage, bringing our mission to life and highlighting the transformative confidence that learning provides.

Finally, our newest annual event, *A Night at the Library*, returned in partnership with the Friends of the Allen County Public Library. Guests enjoyed tours of The Genealogy Center, Fine Books Room, the new Studio, and the whimsical StoryScape. It was a feast for the senses featuring a live art demonstration by America Carrillo, piano by Aaron Smith, and music from Canterbury students.

We are grateful for the collaboration and shared vision that made these events possible. Thank you to everyone who participated and supported our mission. Together, we are writing a better story for our community.

**Community Events**

*Literacy Changes Lives.*

## Partners and Donors

The success of our programs is a direct reflection of the strength and generosity of our community.

To our distinguished donors and community partners: thank you for your steadfast support. Your contributions provide the essential foundation for our operations, ensuring that we can continue to deliver high-quality, life-changing educational experiences to those who need them most. By investing in these individuals, you are investing in the resilience and prosperity of our entire region.

This report gratefully acknowledges contributions received during the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2024, and ending August 31, 2025.



## Foundations

*The Literacy Alliance receives 30% of its support from local foundations.*

3Rivers Credit Union Foundation  
Adams County Community Foundation  
Ardelle and Theresa Glaze Foundation  
Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne  
Dollar General Literacy Foundation  
Edward M and Mary McCreia Wilson Foundation  
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Lassus Brothers Oil Foundation  
Lincoln Financial Foundation  
M E Raker Foundation  
McComb Family Foundation  
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Prophet Sisters Foundation  
Rifkin Family Foundation  
Rudolph Family Foundation  
St. Joseph Community Health Foundation  
Testamentary Trust of Jack A. Ewing  
The Journal Gazette Foundation  
The Waterfield Foundation

## Businesses and Organizations

*Companies and groups join together in support of TLA through event sponsorships, internal fundraising measures, and corporate giving programs.*

ACB General Contractor  
Ambassador Enterprises  
Artek, Inc.  
Baden Gage & Schroeder  
BAE Systems Community Investment  
Benevity Causes  
Burlington English  
Burt, Blee, Dixon, Sutton & Bloom, LLP  
Centier Bank  
CFGFW Endowment  
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Comcast  
Custom Engineering and Fabrication  
Daisy Mays Social Club  
Don R. Fruchey, Inc.  
EPCO Products, Inc.  
Florida Cars  
Fort Financial  
Fort Wayne Housing Authority  
Fort Wayne Metals Research Product Corp.  
Goodwill Industries of Northeast Indiana  
Haines, Isenbarger & Skiba, LLC  
Half Price Books Community Services  
Home Lumber

Horizon Bank  
IBEW Local Union 305  
Indiana Arts Commission  
Indiana Department of Workforce Development  
Indiana Tech  
Ivy Tech Foundation  
Kiwanis - John Chapman  
Korte Does It All Inc.  
Kroger Rewards  
Lake City Bank  
Moake Park Group  
MVP Lanes  
New Car Dealers Association  
Parrish Leasing  
PHP  
Pizza Hut of Fort Wayne  
Pro Resources  
Psi Iota Xi Pi Chapter  
Psi Iota Xi Theta Theta Chapter  
Rea Magnet Wire Company  
Roar Social  
STAR Financial Bank  
Strahm Building Solutions  
Sweetwater  
United Steel Workers Local 715  
United Way of Allen County  
University of St. Francis Education Dept.

## Individual Donors (\$2,500+)

Marsha Baltés  
Gary Chaney  
Donn and Janet Chatham  
David English+  
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Linda Alt  
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Thomas Freeman  
David and Catherine Fruchey  
Matt Wire and Cletus Goens+  
Melinda and Bruce Haines+  
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James and Pat Marcuccilli  
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Ann Wallace and Mark Troutman  
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Trudy Adams  
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Faith and David Van Gilder  
Beth Walker

Ann J. Weber  
Bart and Deb Weldon  
David Worley

## (\$250 - \$499)

Steven Aldred  
James Amstutz  
Dave and Jacqueline Beard  
Bob Behr  
Liz Bushnell  
Ginny Clark  
Marcia Crawford  
Mary Daly  
Keith Davis  
Sheri Davis+  
Greg and Joy Edwards  
Walter and Lois Fuller  
Colin Gallagher+  
Leah Grant  
Anne Gull  
Richard and Linda Hite

The listed individuals and organizations supported TLA during the 2024 fiscal year. Those marked with a (+) achieved Perfect Attendance by making a regular monthly or quarterly gift throughout the fiscal year.

### **Individual Donors Cont.**

Joe and Tammy Hyndman+  
Georgean Johnson-Coffey  
Susan Kahn  
Zach Barron and Kelly Karr  
Catherine Lee  
Mary Lee  
Francine and Scott Liebhauser+  
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Vida McCray  
Michael McKinley  
Anna Menze  
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Kevin Morse  
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Shanon Porter  
Maribel Robles  
Matt Smith  
Ted Smith  
Shawn Sollenberger  
Ted Storer  
Terri and Danny Swim  
Pamela Taylor

Patrice Teel  
James and Nancy Toone  
Sharon Tubbs  
Mauricio Vergara  
Judith Wessler  
Sam and Laura Woodfill+

### **(\$1 - \$249)**

Kathy Adair  
Tammy and Chris Allen  
Steve and Jana Ankenbruck  
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Pam Barcalow  
Diane Barkey  
Sharon Barnes  
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Marjorie Baumgartel  
Ruth Bever  
Daisy Biddle  
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Brett Brown  
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Elizabeth Castillo  
Israel Castillo  
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Virginia Coats  
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James Crouse and  
Jane Porter-Gresham  
Tara Croy  
Shawna Dau  
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Nicholas Ferreri  
Vernell Fettig  
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Sandy Garcia  
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Alan Grinsfelder  
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Tom and Nancy Hansen  
Bethany Harrison  
Linda and Frederick Hasecke  
Barbara Hasty  
Mary Haynes  
James and Anne Heger  
Leonard J. Helfrich  
Paul and Deborah Helmke  
Bette Hiatt  
Candace Hoffacker  
Michael Horton  
Rae Huffman  
Kari Hullinger  
Jamie Ice and Kyle Wilson  
Kenneth Jehle

***TLA has not only taught me a language, but also provided me with an invaluable tool that will allow me to continue growing and overcoming barriers.***

- Project Connect Student Scarlett

*Those marked with a (+) achieved Perfect Attendance by making a regular monthly or quarterly gift throughout the fiscal year.*

**Every morning, I tell the little voice in the back of my mind, "I am worthy!" "I am deserving!" Now that my life has settled down, I am working toward what I have been dreaming of for an exceptionally long time. I am going to expand my horizons. - TLA Graduate Eratee**

**Individual Donors Cont.**

Susan Johnson  
James Jonas  
John and Angele Judd  
Jason Kahlenbeck  
Lisa Kemper  
Barbara Kinsey  
Ann Kline  
Megan Knight  
Deb and Randy Koepke  
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Priyanka Koratpallikar  
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Laurie Stroup  
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Debra Waybright  
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Jane Winnerman Shaw  
Carol Wire  
Lisa Worrell  
Marsha Worthington  
Jane Wuthrich  
Matthew W. Wyatt  
April Wyss  
Duane and Rachel Yoder  
JC and Sharon York  
Clara Zacharias  
Ira Zadylak  
Steven Zimmerman

*Those marked with a (+) achieved Perfect Attendance by making a regular monthly or quarterly gift throughout the fiscal year.*

## Endowment Donors

Bob Behr  
Isa and Elizabeth Canavati  
Lucille Hess  
Georgian Johnson-Coffey  
James and Janice Koday  
Evert and Susan Mol  
Mark and Cindy Renshaw  
Bill Rujevcan  
Paige Salway-Watson  
Tracy and Gretchen Shellabarger  
William and Carol Stiles  
Linda Trzynka  
J. Nelson and Mary Coats  
Julie Rhinehart Waterfield  
Dawn Wilhelm

## In-Kind Donations

Allen County Public Library  
Agaves Mexican Grill  
Allen County Parks  
Bark  
BJs Brewhouse  
Bradley Gough  
Bridge of Grace  
Combat Ops  
Cookie Cottage  
Corey Porter  
Costco Wholesale  
Drive & Shine  
Eric Nau

Erin Nicolette  
Fearless Cook  
Fort Wayne Outfitters  
Fort Wayne Newspapers  
Fort Wayne Philharmonic  
Fort Wayne Zoo  
Granite City Food & Brewery  
Harley Davidson  
Homestead High School  
Hyde Brothers  
Indianapolis Motor Speedway  
Jason Kahlenbeck  
Kendra Scott Jewlery  
Komets  
Laura Smart  
Lincoln Financial Group  
Logan's Roadhouse  
MaidPro  
Matt Wire and Cletus Goens  
ObiCai Restaurant Group  
Oh Five Scoop Shop  
Old National Bank  
Paws & Claw Pet Center  
Portillo's Fort Wayne  
Saddleback Leather  
Shigs In Pit BBQ & Brew  
Tim Van Houten  
Two EE's Winery  
Wells County Public Library  
Visit Fort Wayne  
WBOI  
YMCA

## Donations in Honor Of

Cathie Bledsoe  
Ron Duchovic  
Mary McDonald  
Jane McGraw  
Colin Shoemaker

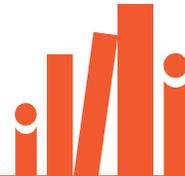
## Donations in Memory Of

Steve Larrabee  
Sue Manning  
Marjorie J. Miller  
John D. Reed  
Rosemary Roberts  
Nick Wilhelm

## Stabelli Society Members

David and Deb Morse  
Carla Slagle  
Donna Weldy  
Charlotte Weybright

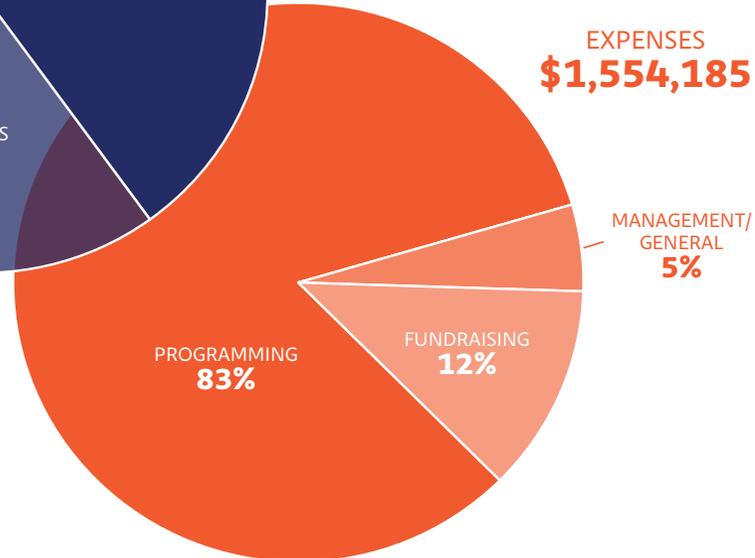
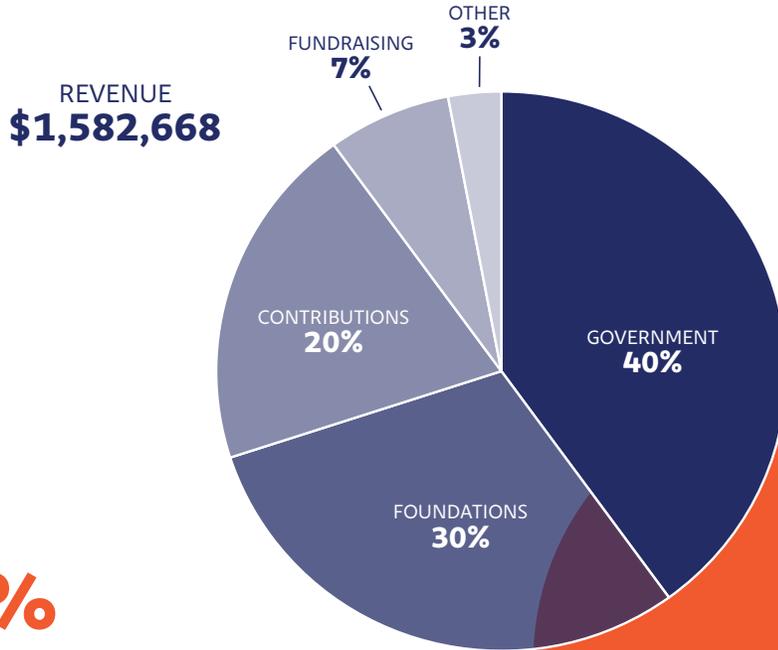
*Members of this society receive special recognition or may choose to remain anonymous and are invited as our guests to all TLA events. Planned gifts of any size help ensure the long-term strength of TLA and create a lasting legacy of literacy. Want more information? Just let us know!*



***After showing up to class on the first day, I wasn't nervous or scared. I was confident in my ability to get my GED. The teacher was so nice, there were so many helpful people, and not only that, but I could also do it at my own pace! It's a school that I've always longed for. Getting my GED is a necessity. I am working my hardest and am excited to be ready to take the final test. - TLA Graduate Paul***

# Fiscal Year 2024-25

The Literacy Alliance is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Support for our services comes from a variety of resources. Our financial statements and 990 are available to view on our website, [literacyalliance.org](http://literacyalliance.org).



## 13%

### Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne Endowment Growth

The Literacy Alliance has held endowment funds at the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne since 2007. Fund balances at the beginning of FY 2024-25 were \$219,863 and grew to \$249,371 at the end of the fiscal year.

# Unlock Potential. Transform Lives.



Since 1972, The Literacy Alliance has operated on one powerful belief: literacy changes lives.

Education opens doors that were once locked tight. From personal growth to professional success, our free programs ensure that every learner in Allen, Adams, and Wells Counties has the tools they need to thrive. When you support us, you aren't just making a donation; you are breaking down barriers and empowering Hoosiers to build stronger futures for themselves and their families.

## Your Gift in Action

Whether providing a \$5 GED Ready Test, funding a start-up library for a Habitat for Humanity home, or supporting the Schlichtenmyer Scholarship for Ivy Tech students, your contribution creates lasting change.

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There are a variety of giving options to fit your financial goals, including:

- *Perfect Attendance*: Monthly/quarterly giving that provides steady support.
- *Tax-Advantaged Giving*: Utilizing NAP Credits (up to 50% state tax credit), Donor Advised Funds, or IRA transfers.
- *Legacy Gifts*: Planned giving through The Stabelli Society.

Together, we can write a future where everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

Have questions about how to make your impact? We would love to speak with you. Please reach out to us at: (260) 426-7323 or donate today at [literacyalliance.org](https://literacyalliance.org).

### **Administrative Staff**

Melinda Haines, chief executive officer  
Matt Wire, chief marketing and communications officer  
Shubitha Keever, director of operations and chief examiner  
Laura Woodfill, associate director of development  
Juliana Bengs, associate director of workforce development  
Michael Jackson, outreach coordinator  
Nikki Minarik, volunteer and event coordinator  
Cathie Bledsoe, digital navigator  
Brian Thomas, administrative coordinator  
Drew Herendeen, administrative coordinator  
and test center administrator

### **Project Reads**

Deb Dutton, program director  
JC York, site coordinator  
Sheri Davis, site facilitator  
Lynnette Pozorski, site facilitator  
Karen Sinish, site facilitator  
Linda Thorne, site facilitator  
Victoria Wilson, site facilitator  
Jane Winnerman-Shaw, site facilitator

### **Project Graduate**

Megan Knight, site coordinator  
David Arnold, teacher  
Tanisha Causey, teacher  
Amy Mohr, teacher  
Nan Wilson, teacher

### **Project Connect**

Jessica Conley, teacher  
Kami Gavilanez, teacher  
Anna Garmatz, teacher  
Amanda Voorman, teacher

### **Project Aim**

Jessica Conley, teacher  
Kami Gavilanez, teacher

# TLA STAFF

### **Culture Statement**

At The Literacy Alliance, each program, decision, and interaction is guided by the needs and goals of the students we serve. We believe literacy is the foundation for lasting change — not just for individuals, but for families and entire communities.

Our culture is built on compassion, empowerment, and a belief in every learner's potential. We foster respect, belonging, and high expectations.

We honor the diverse stories our students bring and champion their journeys toward personal growth, career readiness, and lifelong learning. Literacy changes lives. Together we are building a stronger future, one student at a time.

**Isabel Nuñez**, *chair*  
Purdue University Fort Wayne

**Erin Nicolette**, *vice chair*  
Lincoln Financial Group

**Michaela Baldwin**, *treasurer*  
Legends Global Merchandise

**Tammy Allen**, *secretary*  
The Rescue Mission

**Corey Porter**, *past chair*  
Lincoln Financial Group

**Trudy Adams**  
Brightpoint

**Susan Baier**  
Allen County Public Library

**Ben Bailey**  
Barrett McNaghy

**Kara Densmore**  
Old National Bank

**Ron Duchovic**  
Retired Educator

**Teresa Knoblauch**  
East Allen County Schools

**Fred McKissack**  
Fort Wayne Journal Gazette

**State Representative Kyle Miller**  
Kekionga Bookkeeping Services

**Luke Mungovan**  
Lake City Bank

**Sharon Tubbs**  
HealthVisions Midwest of Fort Wayne

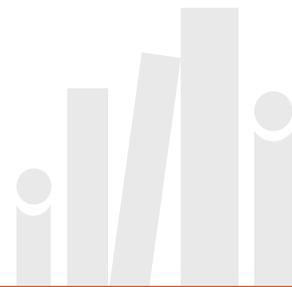
**Tim VanHouten**  
Fort Wayne Metals

**LaRae Bane**, *board intern*  
Allen County Public Library

**Justin Treft**, *board intern*  
Fort Wayne Allen-County  
Airport Authority

**Melinda Haines**, *ex officio*  
The Literacy Alliance

# 2024–25 Board of Directors



*Literacy Changes Lives.*



1005 West Rudisill Boulevard, Suite 307, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46807  
literacyalliance.org | (260) 426-7323