Advancing Literacy

A Newsletter of The Literacy Alliance

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Student Spotlight: Cecilia

Cecilia left school in ninth grade back in Mexico and never imagined earning a GED. English felt impossible, and doubt followed her into every class at Project Graduate. But her teacher, Tanisha, kept pushing her to the board, kept believing in her before she believed in herself. Cecilia passed math, then science, then social studies, and finally language arts, all while working ten-hour days as a single mother. "I don't believe that I passed," she said. "But I did."

Read Cecilia's full story on our blog:
www.literacyalliance.org/blog

A Year of Growth: 2025-26 Program Impact

As a new program year begins, we're looking back at the impact of 2025-26. The numbers tell a clear story: our students learned more, tested better, and outpaced state and regional peers across nearly every measure.

In Project Graduate, 77% of enrolled students showed measurable academic gains, up from 68% last year, and 32% earned their high school equivalency, up from 22%. Project Connect served 196 students with a 65% skill gain rate, up from 59%, well ahead of Region 3's 63%. And Project Reads served 116 students across 16 sites with 121 active tutors. Of those, 83% of students improved by 4 or more reading levels and 94% of third graders in the Project Reads program passed the IREAD-3 exam!

2025-26 Program Year

A year of measurable growth!

PROJECT GRADUATE SKILL GAINS	PROJECT CONNECT SKILL GAINS	PROJECT READS IREAD-3 PASS RATE
77%	**65%**	**94%**
UP FROM 68% LAST YEAR	UP FROM 59% LAST YEAR	60 OF 64 THIRD GRADERS

TLA's high school equivalency (HSE) graduation rate hit 32%, well above the state's 20% last program year. Graduates become eligible for hundreds of jobs previously out of reach, feeding a more skilled, stable talent pool back into Region 3's employers and economy.

Across the board, this was a year of real, measurable progress, even as state averages moved in the opposite direction. Thank you to our students, tutors, and volunteers for making it happen.

These numbers add up to more than test scores. Every student who earns an HSE/GED diploma or grows as a reader takes a step toward a stronger, more stable workforce for our community, opening the door to better-paying jobs, further education, and access to employer-sponsored health care. Workforce readiness is at the heart of what we do, and this year's gains represent real people stepping into better jobs, better health, and better futures.

Early Bird Tickets Now Available!

Join us for a fantastic night of food, fun, and purpose! Treat yourself to great eats from **Club Soda** and non-stop laughs with nationally touring comedians **Arvin Mitchell** and **Mike Maxwell.** Best of all, every ticket supports TLA's free literacy and workforce development programs, empowering individuals and strengthening our community.

Get Your Tickets Today!

Print the Flyer

Free Entrepreneurship Certificate: Enrollment Now Open

Turn your business idea into reality. The Literacy Alliance's free Entrepreneurship Certificate program kicks off its next cohort on September 11. The program will run through November 20 and meets Wednesdays and Fridays from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Seats are limited, so sign up today by clicking the button below.

Sign Up Today!

To print or share this flyer, click the image or the button to the left to download it.

Project Reads Book of the Month

Too Much Glue
Jason Lefebvre (Author) | Zac Retz (Illustrator)
32 Pages | Ages 4 to 8

Winner of Montana's 2016 Treasure State Award, this is the story of a boy named Matty who loves glue more than anything, despite his art teacher's warning that too much glue never dries. When Matty discovers the fullest bottles in art class, he pours out a lake of glue and belly-flops right into the middle of it, only to find himself stuck fast to the desk. Instead of getting mad, his dad arrives and celebrates his son's creativity, declaring him a work of art.

Get Your Copy Here

Partner with The Literacy Alliance to Support Your Clients!

Are you a local agency with clients who could benefit from free programs such as high school equivalency preparation or English language learning? We would be happy to schedule a facility tour or staff presentation to share more about how we can support your community.

Outreach coordinator Mike Jackson is also available to speak to your church, civic group, club, or community organization about the programs and services we offer. If your group hosts an annual festival, fair, or community event, we would love to be part of it.

Mike genuinely enjoys meeting new people and talking to our community about TLA, so don't hesitate to reach out.

To refer clients, schedule a visit, or invite Mike to speak at your next event, please contact him at:

(260) 423-0006 (direct)
mike@literacyalliance.org

Community Resources

The Literacy Alliance's **Community Resources** section connects you to job opportunities, financial aid, continuing education, housing assistance, legal support, healthcare, and more, all in one place.

We update it regularly, so if you haven't checked it out yet (or it's been a while), now's the time! Click the button to explore resources that can make a difference today.

Visit the Community Page

The Literacy Alliance
Literacy Changes Lives.

Literacy Changes Lives. Our mission is to empower people and strengthen community through education.

You Can Help
Volunteer
Refer a Student
Donate Today

Office Hours
Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

1005 W. Rudisill Blvd., Suite 307
Fort Wayne, IN 46807
(260) 426-7323 | Email

2024-2025 Impact Report

Remound Wright
Interim Chief Executive Officer

Matt Wire
Chief Marketing and Communications Officer

Shubitha Kever
Director of Operations/Chief Examiner

Deb Dutton
Program Director, Project Reads

Juliana Bengs
Associate Director of Workforce Development

Laura Woodfill
Grant Manager

Mike Jackson
Outreach Coordinator

Nikki Minarik
Volunteer and Event Coordinator

Juliauna Meyer
Development Coordinator

Drew Herendeen
Administrative Coordinator/Testing Administrator

Aisha Cansler
Testing Administrator

Click here to see the entire TLA team.

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