

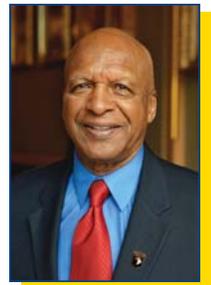
# LITERACY

FALL  
2018

# ILLINOIS

**Jesse White**  
Secretary of State  
& State Librarian

I understand the financial strain and hardship many agencies experienced due to the recent budget impasse. As State Librarian, I am proud to report that the restoration of funding is available to statewide literacy programs. It is imperative that these programs have the resources necessary so they can effectively provide services to citizens in need of educational assistance.



In May, I celebrated the achievements of adult learners and volunteer tutors at an annual event that recognizes the outstanding work of literacy providers, their students and the many volunteers who assist adults with learning. This issue contains an inspirational story of an adult learner that improved his life as a result of the services offered by a local literacy program.

This autumn, I look forward to the 27th annual Family Reading Night scheduled on Nov. 15. I encourage families to turn off televisions, computers, phones, video games and other electronic devices and spend time reading together. Reading can educate, enlighten and enrich all of us. I salute all adults who take the time to read to children, and I look forward to this annual celebration of reading.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jesse White".

**Jesse White**  
Secretary of State & State Librarian

## Secretary White awards more than \$4.7 million to literacy projects

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White recently awarded \$4,732,205 to 97 literacy projects in Illinois. These projects are available at 275 different service locations in Cook County, including the city of Chicago, and at 734 service locations throughout the rest of the state. More than 12,000 adult learners will be served in 72 Illinois counties. Additionally, over 700 families, including nearly 900 children, will participate in the Penny Seaverns Family Literacy Grant program.

"My office is pleased to have the ability to provide much needed funding for agencies that offer services to the most vulnerable adults and families in Illinois," said White. "Educational opportunities provide these individuals with a way to prosper and, in many cases, survive in today's world."

The following are descriptions of the awards distributed:

**Adult Volunteer Literacy** – \$3,555,330 was awarded to 65 projects to provide training for more than 6,200 volunteers who tutor adults over age 17 who read, write, compute or comprehend below the ninth-grade level or score below SPL 7 for non-native English speakers.

**Penny Seaverns Family Literacy** – \$1,064,580 was awarded to 24 programs that provide parents



A volunteer tutor and an adult learner work together at a Secretary of State funded literacy program.

and children – both individually and together – instructional services to enhance their basic reading, math, writing or language skills. Grants are awarded to partnerships that include an adult literacy provider, a public library and a child-at-risk organization.

**Workplace Skills Enhancement** – \$112,295 was awarded to eight educational agency and business partnerships that offer employees on-site instructional services to enhance their basic reading, math, writing or language skills; maintain their employment; and increase their eligibility for promotion. Grants are matched dollar-for-dollar by the participating business.

## A Night of 1000 Stars celebrates 21st Anniversary



Secretary White and Rebecca Raymond, executive director of the Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition, pose for a photo during A Night of 1000 Stars celebration.

A Night of 1000 Stars celebrated its 21st Anniversary on May 17 at the Harold Washington Center Library in downtown Chicago. More than 100 adult learners, literacy program practitioners and local dignitaries attended the program. The annual celebration was hosted by the North Side, South Side and West Side literacy coalitions. Dena Giacometti of the Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition emceed the program, and Kathy Allison of United for Better Living gave a warm welcome speech.

White inspired those in attendance with words of encouragement and gratitude. He thanked the adult learners and tutors for their commitment and reminded everyone to strive to make the world a better place through education.

The event included performances by adult learners from Centro Romero, the Delta Literacy Project, the Indo-American Center and the Jane Addams Resource Corporation. The presentations included original poems written in both English and Spanish, along with songs performed by Yasir Rizvi and by Mina Parmar from the Indo-American Center. Parmar's rendition of "We Shall Overcome Someday" was the highlight of the evening. Students from Centro Romero showcased a beautiful display of their artwork and poetry. The event ended with two lucky adult learners winning Chromebooks during a raffle.

## English as a Second Language student addresses peers at ceremony

"I want to learn as much English as I can because I know it will be useful to me in this country." Jorge Blancas shared this message with peers of the English as a Second Language (ESL) program, their families and friends at Waubensee Community College (WCC) in Aurora, during the school's ESL Program Recognition Ceremony. Jorge and 41 other adult learners who successfully completed the school's multi-level ESL course received certificates of achievement, as well as praise from their instructors for their hard work and determination.

Jorge's path to English language literacy began three years ago when he was offered a job promotion. He had arrived to the United States from Mexico in 1999 and made his home in Aurora. He never found it necessary to know more

than a little English since Spanish was predominately spoken in his community and by his coworkers. After cooking in a local restaurant for a few years, his employer recognized that Jorge had the work ethic and leadership skills to become a kitchen manager and offered him the position at another location. Unfortunately, at the new location a majority of employees spoke only English. "I could understand what they said," Jorge explained during his speech, "but I could not speak or write English very well, so I knew they wouldn't be able to understand me. This frustrated me so much that I decided to quit my job."

The restaurant manager would not accept Jorge's resignation. The manager contacted Literacy DuPage, a Naperville-based nonprofit organization



Jorge Blancas proudly displays his Certificate of Achievement.

(Cont. on pg. 5)

## Adult New Reader Book Clubs

The Secretary of State Illinois State Library Literacy Office has book collections that are available to literacy programs and libraries to conduct adult new reader book clubs. Each book collection has 20 copies of a title and a discussion leader guide. The guide contains background information about the author and book, as well as discussion questions. Most titles include an unabridged audio CD of the book.

The collections are a popular tool and are frequently used by literacy programs to supplement instruction and tutoring. There are 22 different book club titles available. The selection includes classics – such as “To Kill A Mockingbird” by Harper Lee and “Of Mice and Men” by John Steinbeck – and contemporary titles – such as “Just Gone” by William Kowalski and “An Invisible Thread” by Laura Schroff. Biographies on Mother Theresa, Nelson Mandela and Dr. Ben Carson are also included in the selection of titles.

“The book clubs introduce adult learners to reading for pleasure,” explains Beth Paoli, literacy grant specialist with the Secretary of State Illinois State Library Literacy Office. “Studies statistically prove that adult learners who participate in book clubs read with greater comprehension and fluency.”

The collections are free to borrow and will be delivered to the public library in closest proximity to your agency upon request. For information on the program or to find out how to borrow a collection visit: [http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/book\\_clubs.html](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/book_clubs.html).



Adult learners at the Erie Neighborhood House literacy program in Chicago read Just Gone as part of a new reader book club.

## October is Health Literacy Month

Health Literacy Month provides an opportunity to promote the importance of understandable health information. Celebrations in support of Health Literacy Month include awareness events for professionals; wellness programs for patients and the public; and educational offerings for students at all levels.

The following list of curricula and assessments are appropriate for use by literacy programs, libraries and other community organizations to educate the community on health literacy. These recommendations were selected from a comprehensive list of resources compiled by Duke University Medical Center Library and Archives. The guide in its entirety can be accessed at <https://guides.mclibrary.duke.edu/healthliteracy>.

- **“Teaching Patients with Low Literacy Skills”** – This book is considered a classic text in health literacy. It covers a range of topics, including educational theories, tests for literacy skills and assessments of the suitability of materials. The book can be read or downloaded at <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/health-literacy/resources/teaching-patients-with-low-literacy-skills/>.
- **Expecting the Best: ESL Health and Wellness Curriculum** – This curriculum is for ESL students and is designed to improve health literacy and functional literacy and enhance English-communication skills. Access the curriculum at <https://www.cls.utk.edu/expectthebest.html>.
- **Health Literacy Tool Shed** – This tool is a unique, online database of more than 100 empirically validated health literacy research instruments located at <http://healthliteracy.bu.edu/>.
- **Integrating Health Literacy into Adult Education** – This source provides four study circles intended to enhance practitioner understanding of health literacy issues. View the information at <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/practice/training/>.

For more ideas on how to recognize Health Literacy Month, visit <http://www.healthliteracymonth.org/>.



## Family Reading Night to be held November 15

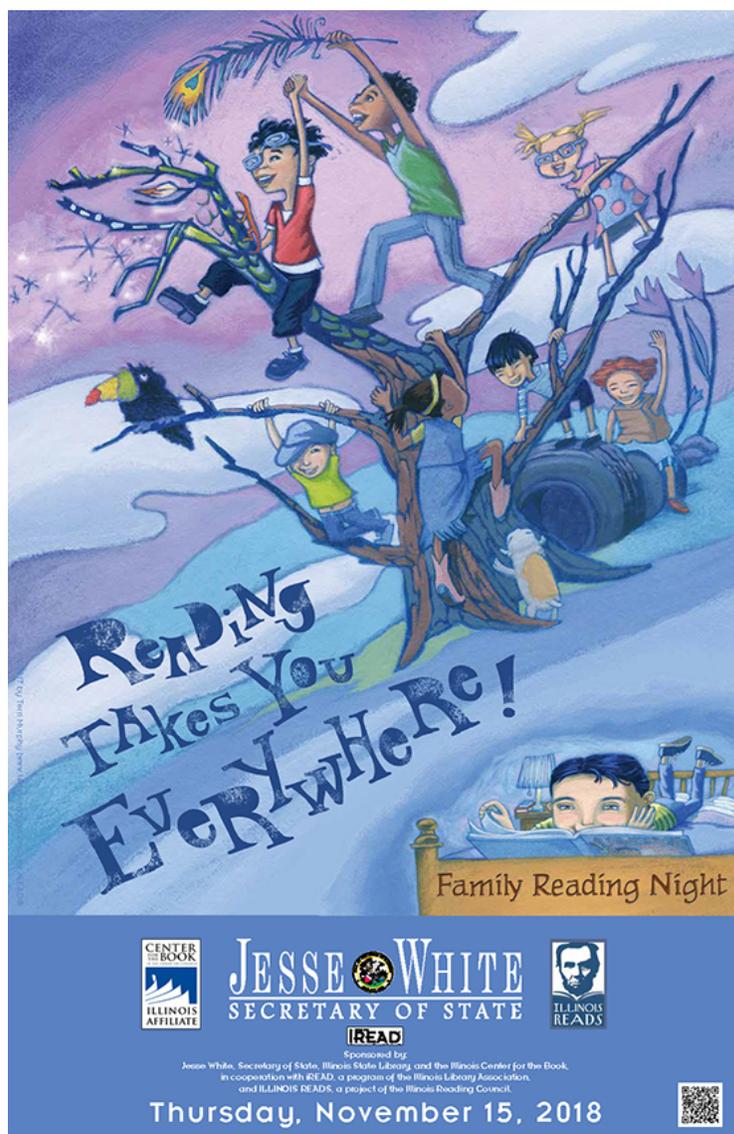
Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White is encouraging Illinois families to set aside time the evening of Nov. 15 to read together as part of the Secretary of State's annual Family Reading Night (FRN). This year's theme is based on the Illinois Library Association's iREAD "Reading Takes You Everywhere" program. Thousands of colorful posters and bookmarks will be distributed by the State Library's Illinois Center for the Book to libraries, schools and literacy programs throughout the state to promote FRN.

"One of the greatest gifts an adult can give a child is time spent together reading," White said. "Reading together strengthens the family unit, creates a positive environment for learning and instills a love for reading in our children."

This year's poster and bookmark for the iREAD program and FRN was designed by Illinois artist and illustrator Terri Murphy. Materials for the event can be downloaded from the Secretary of State's website at: [http://cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/center\\_for\\_the\\_book/frn.html](http://cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/center_for_the_book/frn.html). In addition to the materials, the website provides examples of ideas and activities that libraries and literacy programs can use for their upcoming event.

This is the 27th year that the Secretary of State's office has sponsored FRN. All events are free and open to the public. Contact your local library for events taking place in your community.

Libraries and literacy programs are encouraged to submit photographs and stories to the Illinois State Library highlighting their FRN events. For additional information about FRN, visit [http://cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/center\\_for\\_the\\_book](http://cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/center_for_the_book) or contact Bonnie Matheis, coordinator of the Illinois Center for the Book, at [bmatheis@ilsos.net](mailto:bmatheis@ilsos.net) or 217-558-2065.



**Reading Takes You Everywhere!**

Family Reading Night

**CENTER OF THE BOOK ILLINOIS AFFILIATE**

**JESSE WHITE SECRETARY OF STATE**

**ILLINOIS READS**

**iREAD**

Sponsored by Jesse White, Secretary of State, Illinois State Library, and the Illinois Center for the Book, in cooperation with iREAD, a program of the Illinois Library Association, and ILLINOIS READS, a project of the Illinois Reading Council.

**Thursday, November 15, 2018**



## Tutor training curriculum available in printable format

Helping adults improve their literacy and English-language skills is an important task that requires training. Adult volunteer tutors at all Secretary of State literacy grant programs must complete at least 12 hours of training to be eligible to work with an adult learner. Several years ago, the Secretary of State's office developed a web-based Adult Literacy Volunteer tutor training program as an alternative to face-to-face training.

Many tutor trainers have suggested that our office include a printable version of the training program for prospective tutors who experience difficulties using a computer. The literacy office is pleased to announce that a printable version of the tutor training is now available at [http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/oltt/pdfs/literacy\\_tutor\\_training\\_prnt.pdf](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/oltt/pdfs/literacy_tutor_training_prnt.pdf).

Regardless of the training method used, establishing a close working relationship with a local adult literacy program is critical to success. To learn more about becoming an adult volunteer tutor, please visit <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/oltt/home.html>. To locate a literacy program in your area, please contact the Adult Learning Hotline at 800-321-9511 or visit [www.thecenterweb.org/alrc/hotline.html](http://www.thecenterweb.org/alrc/hotline.html).

that provides customized English-language assistance for adults, and arranged for a volunteer tutor to meet with Jorge once a week at the restaurant. Before long, management and fellow employees noticed an improvement in his English skills and self-confidence. His renewed desire to learn inspired him to enroll in the ESL program at WCC in January 2017.

“Jorge is an inspiration to learners at Literacy DuPage who are working to improve their English to find a job, gain confidence and communicate more effectively in their workplace,” said Therese McMahon, executive director of Literacy DuPage. “This restaurant recognized the benefit of English-language tutoring in the workplace and increasing their employee’s access to these services, and they

should serve as a model to other businesses.”

Each year, nearly 400 Literacy DuPage volunteers provide English-language tutoring for 500 immigrants and adult learners at libraries, workplaces and other public spaces throughout DuPage County. Around 40 percent of the adult learners in the program seek tutoring based on goals associated with employment.

Jorge continues to meet with his tutor once a week and is no longer considered an ESL learner but rather a student of Adult Basic Education. He continues his education at WCC and is preparing to take the GED test.

## ON THE HORIZON

- **October** – Domestic Violence Awareness Month; Health Literacy Month
- **October 2-5** – American Association for Adult and Continuing Educators, Myrtle Beach, SC, <https://www.aaace.org/page/2018ConflandingPage>
- **October 4-6** – Illinois Reading Council Conference, Peoria, <http://www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org/conference.html>
- **October 9-11** – Illinois Library Association Annual Conference, Peoria, <https://www.ila.org/>
- **October 24-27** – International Dyslexia Association Reading Literacy & Learning Conference, Mashantucket, CT, <https://dyslexiaida.org/conference/>
- **November 15** – Family Reading Night, the theme for 2018 is “Reading Takes You Everywhere!”
- **November 15-18** – National Council of Teachers of English, Houston, TX, <https://convention.ncte.org/>
- **November 28** – December 1 – Literacy Research Association, Indian Wells, CA, <https://www.literacyresearchassociation.org/annual-conference>
- **November 30** – Northern Illinois Adult Education Conference, Itasca, <http://www.thecenterweb.org/alrc/event-conference.html>

More literacy event information is available at [www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/home.html](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/home.html) (click Calendar of Literacy Events).

# WWW



<http://libraries.idaho.gov/files/School-Libraries-Hosting-Event.pdf>

The Idaho Commission for Libraries offers a number of tips for hosting a Family Reading Night event. Ideas range from objectives to advice on increasing parent attendance.

[http://www.scholastic.com/bookfairs/assets/downloads/final\\_8825\\_read\\_and\\_rise\\_facilitators\\_guide.pdf](http://www.scholastic.com/bookfairs/assets/downloads/final_8825_read_and_rise_facilitators_guide.pdf)

*Scholastic Magazine* offers a facilitator’s guide to conducting a Family Reading Night event. The guide includes a program overview, planning tips, a materials list with sources and an outline with talking points.

<https://www.ptoday.com/sfn#family-reading-night>

PTO Today provides a free, downloadable Family Reading Night kit containing planning guidelines, invitation flyers, promotional graphics, activities, snack ideas, book suggestions for guest readers and more.

**Illinois Literacy is a publication of the Secretary of State,  
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Jesse White, Secretary of State and State Librarian  
Greg McCormick, Deputy Director, Illinois State Library**

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