

R.E.A.D.

READING ENABLES ADULT DEVELOPMENT

Fall 2020 Newsletter

Our mission is to provide adults the opportunity to improve or transform their lives by strengthening their reading and language skills.



Planning for the Future

While 2020 has been a difficult year, one thing has become very clear to us – R.E.A.D. is not going anywhere! During the past few months, while our program has operated at reduced capacity due to all the COVID restrictions, we've been taking the time to focus on the future of R.E.A.D. We hope to continue to evolve and improve our program here in the Tri-Cities area, while also expanding to serve more of our county!

In the Tri-Cities area, we plan to adapt some of our operations so that we can begin to serve more of our families online. Earlier this month, we hosted our first ever online learning circle for tutors, to share online resources and show how pairs can safely meet via Zoom or Google Meet! In the future, we hope to begin to offer our tutor training online, so that we can engage potential volunteers throughout the year instead of having interested individuals wait until our next in person training. We recognize that everyone learns differently and would like to offer both in person and online tutor training sessions to suit the needs of the volunteers!

In early March, R.E.A.D. was thrilled to learn that we received a three-year \$35,000 grant from the Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area to expand our service area to include the Holland/Zeeland community. In the community's recent Latino Community Engagement Study, Latin Americans United for Progress (LAUP) found that learning to speak English was determined to be the 2nd most important indicator of success for individuals, but availability and access to free and low-cost ESL resources was the number one obstacle to achieving that goal. We are so excited to offer a solution! While our hope was to begin offering tutor trainings in April 2020, COVID has put the expansion on hold. We are very eager for things to begin to return to something a bit closer to normal, so that we can begin the expansion officially! Our hope is that by the end of 2021, we will have our program up and running in the Holland/Zeeland area!

We are so grateful for all of our community partners for making this expansion possible. All of us at READ cannot wait to see what the future brings!



Board of Directors

Paul Martin, President
Michelle Moore, Vice President
Susan Strobel, Secretary
Sheryl Zajechowski, Treasurer
Susan Lowe
Angel Mendiola
Jeffrey Parriot
Tracy Riley
Abbey Stroop
Aimee Wilson

Staff

Hannah Everett
Executive Director

Jill Roof
Volunteer Coordinator

Marisol Stork
Pair Coordinator

Contact Us:

PO Box 429
Grand Haven, MI 49417
(616) 843-1470
www.readottawa.org
info@readottawa.org

R.E.A.D. is grateful for the



Community Relief and Recovery Fund

In August, READ was selected to receive \$6,000 from the Community Relief and Recovery fund of the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation. This grant helps to make up some of our lost funds from our Annual Scrabble Fundraiser and allow READ to begin preparing online learning circles and training sessions for new volunteers. Additionally, we were able to purchase a new READ phone to replace our old pay-as-you-go flip phone! We now have a much more reliable form of communication.

We are so grateful for the Community Foundation and their ability to provide some stability in these uncertain times!

New Board Members!

This year, we were able to welcome two new Board Members! Abbey Stroop joined us from Herrick District Library, where she currently works as a reference librarian. She has a bachelor's degree in English, and a master's in Library and Information Science. She brings a passion for literacy and connecting people to resources to improve their education!

Jeffrey Parriot is currently working as a Work Team Lead at Herman Miller. He has a bachelor's degree in Business Administration, and plenty of experience volunteering with nonprofits and serving on boards. Jeff has been a READ tutor for the past 2.5 years and has also served on the organization's Marketing Committee to provide valuable insight on promoting READ to those who have low literacy levels.

We are so grateful to have these two join our team and are very excited to see what the future holds!



Welcome to R.E.A.D.'s Newest Volunteer Tutors!



Earlier this year, right before the pandemic shut down our state, we were able to host our Spring Tutor Training! At the time, we had no idea that this would be our last in-person event for the entire year. We were able to train 7 new tutors! In two 3-hour sessions, we were able to cover everything our tutors needed to know about lesson planning, testing, and the ins and outs of the READ program! We're so grateful for all who made the tutor training event possible! The staff at Loutit and Spring Lake District Libraries were great hosts, and we look forward to the day that we can host another training session.