



Providing adults who live in or near Ottawa County with an opportunity to improve and transform their lives by strengthening their reading and language fluency.

March 2024 Newsletter

Change a Life, Give Today



BACK TO BACK TRAININGS YIELD EXCELLENT TUTORS

Read Ottawa training for tutors took place in both Zeeland and Grand Haven in February and resulted in nearly 20 new members added to our team. (Grand Haven pictured above). Once again, we met wonderful people with warm hearts and time to give!

The training for tutors keeps evolving. We have added a role play scenario as well as a short video of a training situation. We have also removed content that no longer is relevant. Current tutors are now coming in person and via zoom to field questions from the trainees on day 2. While training still remains broad and tutoring is always more specific, the connection with and between our new team members is always valuable, interesting and enjoyable.

The Holland/Zeeland program continues to grow with great gusto as 10 new tutor-learner pairs were added since the beginning 2024. Many of our new trainees were put to work with record speed. Keep spreading the word--tutoring is such a meaningful, flexible way to volunteer!



ALLYSON VELDERMAN JOINS READ OTTAWA

Read Ottawa is thrilled to welcome Ally Velderman as the new Executive Director. A native of West Michigan, Ally grew up in Hamilton and graduated from Hope College. As a college student she explored many fields of study in her quest to understand systems and directly help people. Ally has a degree in Political Science and has many health science courses under her belt as well.

Opportunities at Hope allowed Ally to travel and learn about non-profit work in Mississippi, Tennessee and New York City and she returned to Memphis after graduation to work in community development. The work was a huge challenge and "miles outside of my comfort zone," she reports. At the same time the work was an incredible joy and deeply life giving and ultimately Ally would spend 10 years with Service over Self (SOS).

SOS is a non-profit that does critical home repair in an historically underserved neighborhood in Memphis that experiences extreme poverty. Ally put together programs to connect after school students with building trades as well as summer opportunities for middle and high school students to work on roof repair. She is deeply grateful for her experiences and for the people she encountered.

Ally is delighted to be a Michigander again! She is very close to her family and grateful to be more geographically connected. She and her dog Boone plan to soak up the Michigan people and places, especially the family cottage in the U.P.

And as for READ, Ally states, "I have a deep passion for the work of non-profits. I have started to hear about the successes and relationships of READ staff, tutors and learners and I am convinced that this is work with incredible value. I am honored to be part of it."



Mark your calendars!

Saturday, Apr. 20

Support your favorite non-profit organizations by shopping local

Participating Organizations

Buses by the Beach READ Ottawa
Bluebird Cancer Retreats Momentum Center



Our Learners Speak...

- Dari
- Polish
- Pashto/Pashai
- Tamil
- Haitian/Creole
- Cambodian/Khmer
- Hindi
- French
- Thai
- Armenian
- Sudanese
- Spanish
- Korean
- Vietnamese
- English
- Chinese
- Ukrainian
- Russian
- Azerbaijani
- Turkish
- Dutch
- Arabic

Interested in becoming a tutor? RSVP through one of the following:
Filling out the form at <https://readottawa.org/volunteer>
Email Lynn Groothuis at lynn@readottawa.org
Call Lynn at 616-414-0295

"The purpose of learning is growth, and our minds-unlike our bodies-



Website: www.readottawa.org
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