



The Word on Literacy

Summer 2010

Greater Baton Rouge Literacy Coalition

564 Laurel Street

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www.gbrliteracy.org



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Our Mission:

The Greater Baton Rouge Literacy Coalition is dedicated to promoting adult literacy through the creation, maintenance, and sustainability of an integrated, cohesive and well-managed system that supports literacy service providers.

First Adult Education Awareness Day Shows Legislators Impact of Services



On April 14, staff from GBRLC, Literacy Works, St. Paul Adult Learning Center, and YWCA, Center for Family Empowerment joined other local literacy supporters and students, as well as staff, students and volunteers from adult literacy sites in the New Orleans area and greater Louisiana state area, at the state Capitol for Adult Education Awareness Day, an event officially named by the Louisiana Legislature through House Concurrent Resolution No. 108 by Rep. Austin Badon. Staff working with GBRLC, [The Literacy Alliance of Greater New Orleans](#) and [Louisiana Association For Public, Community, and Adult Education](#) (LAPCAE) sought to meet with legislators to demonstrate the impact of the state budget cut of 66% for adult education during fiscal year 2009-2010 and to voice their interest in ensuring that the education of adult learners is not disrupted in the transition of Adult Education from the LA Department of Education to Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

The group of about 100 advocates gathered at the Jackson Barracks to prepare for discussing with legislators the need for literacy services and how legislative leadership can impact not only funding but public perception of adult literacy students. The Literacy Alliance of Greater New Orleans provided lunch for the advocates before they dispersed to meet with legislators and to staff a table in the Capitol Rotunda.



Stephanie Jones, instructor at St. Paul Adult Learning Center, said that, for the seven students that participated in Awareness Day, the experience is one they'll never forget. Students brought with them letters that fellow students and they had written, describing how St. Paul is meeting their educational needs in ways that their former schools did not. "I saw confidences soar," she said, "as they conversed with legislators about issues that mean so much to them."



(top left) St. Paul Adult Learning Center (SPALC) staff and students with Rep. Regina Ashford Barrow. (top right) Staff and students from YWCA. (left) Rep. Patricia Haynes Smith talks with Debbie O'Connor. (middle) The whole crew. (right) Rep. Michael Jackson talks with SPALC students.

You Can Help Us Reach and Support More Adult Learners!

Celebrate International Literacy Day by Visiting Our Volunteer Fair Sept. 12 at the Main Library and by Helping Spread the Word about Volunteer Opportunities!

On September 8, countries throughout the world will celebrate the right to literacy. Help draw attention to this worldwide event by posting literacy-related facts and volunteer opportunities at your business or other locations! Download our [International Literacy Day Toolkit](#) from our website for more details. Religious groups that publicize it will be listed on our website!

A special thank you to pastors of First United Methodist Church, New Beginning Baptist Church and St. Gerard Majella Catholic Church for publicizing Literacy Week 2009! By discussing literacy from the pulpit and encouraging volunteerism through bulletin notices, you helped recruit volunteers and adult learners!



Save the Dates & Support GBRLC during Literacy Week 2010:

Shop any Barnes & Noble store, or Barnes & Noble online, Dec. 1 – 5. Give them our book fair number – **10236602** – and your purchase will benefit GBRLC!

Come into Barnes & Noble, CitiPlace on Wed., Dec. 1, and join us at 7 p.m. to hear student authors read their works from our third student anthology, *Behind My Eyes!*



Dine out at or pick up from a local restaurant on Tuesday, Nov. 30, in celebration of Entrée to Literacy. More details will be listed in our Fall Newsletter and on our website!



Become a 2010 GBRLC member!

Sponsor Literacy Week 2010 and Demonstrate your commitment to improving literacy!

(email Debbie@brac.org for additional description of benefits and to receive emailed Sponsorship Packet)

More on www.gbrliteracy.org:

- *[Links to our PSAs \(one and two\)](#)
- ***2009 and 2008 Student Anthologies**
- *[Photo Albums](#) in our Press Room
- *[Leading the Way to Literacy Video](#)

Help Spread the Word!

"Like" GBRLC on Facebook!

Our goal is 500 new friends by Literacy Week 2010!

[Encourage a high school student to enter our second annual PSA competition!](#)

[Encourage a restaurant to participate in Entrée to Literacy on Nov. 30](#)

Share our newsletter and [website](#) with your friends, family and colleagues

Plan to share Literacy Week 2010 details with friends

Why We Need Your Help:

Dr. Exner, Associate Dean of Education at LSU and Member of GBRLC's Membership Committee, emphasizes, "Improving adult literacy in our community should be the goal of all who enjoy strong literacy skills. GBRLC membership offers each of us opportunities to help widen community understanding of literacy needs in our area and to find ways we can join hands in supporting and expanding literacy services for our fellow citizens."

Help a potential student find services!

If you had no access to a computer, couldn't read a newspaper, and didn't see TV ads or hear radio PSAs about adult literacy services, how would you know where to find them? Dozens of adult literacy students have learned of classes by seeing simple flyers at their workplaces or at sites they visit regularly, such as barber shops.

You can help adult learners find us by posting a flyer in the breakroom at your office or by asking staff at other places you may visit, such as religious sites, to post flyers. We ask all callers where they learned about us, and we'd love to contact you to thank you for helping adults learn about us! To receive this list, please email Marie at marie@brac.org.

To learn more about the services available, visit the [Provider Directory link from our homepage](#). Search by type of class, zip code and site name. Sites can also be located on the Google Maps link. You may contact sites directly, call GBRLC at 381-7141 or email Debbie@brac.org.

Donate time or business services:

Buy a GED test for \$50- Many students are ready to take this important step but can't afford the test fee. You can help a student reach success!

Volunteer as a reading partner, and encourage employees to volunteer

Donate in-kind services or surplus office supplies

Provide incentives for adult learners as they progress

Help a youth group plan a fundraiser

Mentor adult learners and hire GED graduates

Sponsor on-site workplace literacy programs

GBRLC is a nonprofit organization and financial contributions are tax-deductible.

June Article in The Advocate Projects Costs of 2008 Local High School Dropouts

Will Sentell of The Advocate noted in his June 10th article, [Dropouts' Cost Calculated](#), that roughly 2,000 students dropped out of high school in the Baton Rouge area in 2008. These students, if they don't finish high school or earn GEDs, are three times more likely to be poor than their classmates who graduated. With Louisiana ranking 47th in the nation in its public high school graduation rate, and with the literacy level of a child's mother being the greatest predictor of a child's academic success, it is clear that to alleviate poverty in Louisiana, literacy for both children and adults must be addressed.



[St Paul Adult Literacy Center](#) students, above, who are studying to earn their GEDs, have fun but also get serious about advocating for education at Adult Education Awareness Day at the Louisiana State Capitol. While there, they met with several local legislators.

Pre-Release Class at Dixon Correctional Center Learns the "How, What, and Where" of Adult Education and Literacy

Did you know that the State of Louisiana has the highest rate of incarceration in the United States? And of those incarcerated, nearly 15,000 are released back into Louisiana communities each year. The number released combined with the number of individuals still in prison and jail equates to 1 in 26 Louisiana adults being under some form of correctional control (The Pew Center, 2007). At Dixon Correctional Center, Director of Pre-release Michael Ellerbe works to prepare inmates for life beyond prison, providing structured learning opportunities that address important topics such as parenting, financial management, and job-readiness. As part of the program, GBRLC recently met with the pre-release class at Dixon to

share information about accessing adult education and literacy services once they leave the Correctional Center. According to the Louisiana Department of Corrections, most people who enter Louisiana prisons have fourth- and fifth-grade educations, and other research indicates that 50% of prisoners who do not receive educational services will return to prison, meaning that there is a great need to connect inmates with educational opportunities. During GBRLC's two-hour presentation, inmates learned where to find adult education classes throughout the state, what to expect upon enrollment, and how education and job training lead to more earning power.

A GBRLC Scholarship Recipient of Funds to Pay to Take the GED Test Shares His Thanks

"First, I want to say thank you for even giving me the opportunity to get the scholarship. I have been wanting to get my GED for close to three years. I just got out of a halfway house and wasn't quite financially stable for the bills of daily life. I just started my job and can't afford the test. It would be somewhat disappointing not getting my GED because of money."

-Student at Adult Literacy Advocates

Quarterly Community Network Meetings Spur New Ideas and Energy!

GBRLC's June Community Network meeting, held at [St. Paul Adult Learning Center](#), united GBRLC members, including adult literacy instructors and other literacy supporters, as they met a local literacy student and brainstormed ideas for future projects. David Jones, Director of St. Paul's, gave a brief history of the organization and a description of their services before introducing Marcus, a recent GED graduate who also had the honor of talking one-on-one with Rep. Patricia Haynes Smith at Adult Education Awareness Day at the Capitol in April. Marcus, along with his mother, described how Marcus lost interest in his studies at his former high school before transferring to St. Paul's. Now, with his GED, Marcus plans to enroll at a local college to study petroleum engineering. Andi Abraham, Director of Adult Services at the East Baton Rouge Parish Library, described the One Book One Community Summer Selection, and volunteer Gayle Smith distributed bookmarks advertising the Library's summer reading program.

Georgann Mire, an education consultant who chairs the Community Network meetings and also serves on GBRLC's training committee, describes GBRLC's Community Network meetings as "a unique opportunity to pool our energy, ideas and resources to increase literacy in Baton Rouge. There are too many people who can't read in our community," Georgann notes. "It is exciting to work together through these meetings to provide a climate of success for GBRLC students."

Community Network members will meet again on November 4th, in preparation for Literacy Week 2010, and will continue to meet quarterly, while direct adult literacy service providers will meet monthly and as needed to plan programmatically. To learn more about the Network and GBRLC membership, please visit www.gbrliteracy.org or email Debbie at Debbie@brac.org.

Five Adult Literacy Service Providers Work Toward ProLiteracy Accreditation as Part of GBRLC's Capacity Building Project

By Leigh Vaughan, GBRLC Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator

Background of Project:

GBRLC was awarded \$300,000 at the end of 2009 to build capacity with adult literacy service providers in the Baton Rouge area with the desired impact of improving services and ensuring sustainability of programs. Five literacy service providers were awarded funds to create and implement individualized technical assistance plans to assist them in working towards accreditation through ProLiteracy. Additionally, three literacy providers were provided subawards to develop workforce education programs. Through the CCF capacity building projects, adult literacy service providers have been working diligently to implement the 16 Standards necessary to achieve ProLiteracy accreditation and planning the development of 3 unique workforce education projects.



Local adult literacy service providers currently serve fewer than 5% of the Baton Rouge area adult population in need of services.

International Workforce Education Specialist Leads Service Providers in Planning Workforce Programs

GBRLC secured the services of Dr. David Rosen, a well known adult literacy and workforce education specialist, to provide GBRLC service providers with training and individual consultation on the development of new workforce education programs. In his training, Dr. Rosen addressed the 10 steps to building a workforce education program including engaging the employer in conducting a multi-leveled organizational needs assessment and creating a planning and evaluation team with both literacy providers and employer personnel. Dr. Rosen stresses that through this partnership, employers are assured an individualized, comprehensive, and well attended education program for their employees. Dr. Rosen identifies communication as one of the biggest challenges for nonprofits working to partner with businesses. He provided insight and instruction on specific strategies to address the differences between the communication styles of nonprofits and businesses.

Currently, GBRLC service providers are identifying employers to work with on customizing workforce education programs that will provide workers with basic language skills, basic skills, safety skills, writing skills, and other employer identified needs. Dr. Rosen is delivering ongoing technical assistance for GBRLC service providers as needed.

Formerly the Director of the Adult Literacy Resource Institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston/SABES Greater Boston Regional Support Center, Dr. David Rosen is a consultant with Newsome Associates working with adult literacy education and out-of-school youth projects in the U.S. and abroad in the Philippines, South Africa, Bangladesh, Northern Cyprus and Haiti. His interests lie in adult literacy and technology, adult literacy public policy advocacy, and research and evaluation, especially how to engage practitioners and researchers to work together. Dr. Rosen will return to Baton Rouge with Jobs for the Future for a Workforce Literacy Summit this fall.

“One in three Louisiana children lives in a household where no adult has a full-time job.”

(Annie E. Casey Foundation 2010 Kids Count Survey)



San Diego's Jobs for the Future Convening Brings ...

In May, GBRLC Executive Director Debbie O'Connor joined leaders of other local and state adult education and workforce development organizations in San Diego to attend the **“Connecting Literacy and Work”** convening. Hosted by Jobs for the Future (JFF) with support from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, the convening encouraged participants to explore innovative strategies that advance not only the careers of lower-skilled adults but also regional economic competitiveness, through tighter linkages between adult literacy and workforce initiatives at the community level. Jobs for the Future states, “For the millions of job-seekers and working adults with low literacy skills, it is nearly impossible to access and advance through educational and career pathways to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages. For the nation as a whole, large and growing literacy needs among the working-age population immediately threaten our ability to compete in the global economy.”

Debbie, who also serves on the local Workforce Investment Board, explains, “Many communities experience a disconnect between adult literacy programs and workforce development systems, and this convening was a tremendous opportunity to network with literacy and workforce leaders from across the country, all very willing to share best practices, as well as challenges.”

In addition to the resources gathered and the knowledge gleaned during Debbie's participation at the convening, the Baton Rouge community will benefit from local follow-up when Jobs for the Future visits Baton Rouge to help facilitate a workforce literacy summit this fall. The summit will highlight successful models and encourage the level of collaboration necessary to align literacy and workforce development efforts. For more information about this event, contact Debbie at (225) 381-7141 or debbie@brac.org.

Vicki Clark of BoardSource Trains Providers on Board and Volunteer Development to Build Organizational Capacity

By Leigh Vaughan, GBRLC Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator



Recognizing that all boards go through life cycles, Ms. Clark focused on the roles and responsibilities of board members. She identified the organization as the board's primary customer and the board's top priority to ensure the sustainability and strength of the organization. Boards can achieve this by focusing on their effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, connections, and creative solutions.



Ms. Clark Covers ProLiteracy Standard 4: Governing Body Responsibility: The organization has a governing body that forwards the mission of the organization

A great board is what every nonprofit organization wants and what every individual board member strives for. Staff and board members of GBRLC literacy service providers participated in a day long workshop with Memphis-based BoardSource consultant Vicki Clark to learn how to build a better board.

One of the Board's most important functions is to cultivate, recruit, and orient new board members. Having members who are passionate about the mission and understand the organization are vital to its direction. Ms. Clark used the importance of language to stress how we present the function of the board. "We should never ask anyone to 'sit' on a board," says Ms. Clark. Board members should be more engaged, committees should be active and inactive committees should be disbanded.

BoardSource recommends that 80% of Board meeting time be spent making plans for the future, with only 20% spent on reporting the past. This will keep boards engaged and moving forward. Boards should not forget to evaluate their own performance as well as the Executive Director's performance. Evaluation of the board's efforts will determine their effectiveness or need to try a new approach. Boards should never underestimate taking time out to celebrate their achievements. As Ms. Clark says, "After all, we are in this to make a difference in our own lives as well as others!"



Ms. Clark (top left, shown with Sherretta Harrison from Literacy Works) also trained representatives from Adult Literacy Advocates (top right), Family Values Resource Institute (far left) and YWCA (bottom right).

"The Volunteer Management training was very helpful to us. We received an abundance of knowledge on how to engage potential volunteers, train them, and provide effective management. We are especially grateful for the opportunity to work toward receiving our ProLiteracy Accreditation. The process has totally re-energized our Board and helped us recruit more volunteers. I very much appreciate the support and personal visits that we receive from GBRLC for this project. It is a pleasure to work with such dedicated community servants."

Barbara Thomas, President, Family Values Resource Institute

Ms. Clark Covers ProLiteracy Standard 3: Volunteer Management: The organization has a system to recruit, train, supervise, and evaluate non-instructional volunteers

Vicki Clark joined us for a second day at Alzheimer's Services' fabulous facility for a half day training and discussion on engaging volunteers. Ms. Clark emphasized the need to "engage" rather than "use" volunteers by seeking out their interests and goals as well as being open to the time they have to offer. In order to do this effectively, organizations must first identify their own goals and needs and develop an infrastructure to be able to receive volunteers and their multiple talents. Ms. Clark shared a beautiful example of her own father's volunteerism with the Civil Rights Museum in Memphis. She noted that through the seemingly small sphere of influence of a retiree, the Museum gained Vicki's involvement and the involvement

of many others from her father's service organization, including one member's son-in-law who volunteered to participate on the board as a representative of his very large corporation. Message: Be able and ready to engage people who have a passion for your mission... you never know where it may lead!



Additional Trainings Through CCF Grant Allow Providers to Collectively and Individually Develop Organizational Capacity

By Leigh Vaughan, GBRLC Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator

CCF: Technical Assistance gets Technical!

The National Resource Center (NRC) is partnering with the Compassion Capital Fund (CCF) to provide ongoing technical assistance to grantees and subgrantees throughout the CCF grant cycle. NRC offers monthly webinars and an incalculable number of resources on multiple topics available on their website. One of the technical assistance topics offered this quarter from the NRC was Lessons from the Field: Evaluating your Technical Assistance. Along with informational tools and real life examples, NRC offers researched based approaches in their delivery.

Other trainings Providers have accessed:

Certification Process for Eligible Training Programs and Providers, presented by Louisiana Workforce Commission Staff

Fundraising Strategies in "Tell Your Story" Webinar

PowerPath Training for Accommodating Learning Differences

Marketing and Branding your Non-Profit

Understanding the Non-Profit Starvation Cycle

CEO and Succession Planning

Organizations are also conducting strategic planning activities and board retreats, creating fund development plans, and updating policies and procedures.

"The CCF project is providing our organizations with the rare opportunity to develop their capacity, in ways they've identified, to promote sustainability and lead to greater success at no cost to them!"

Debbie O'Connor,
GBRLC Executive
Director

New Partnership with City-Parish Division of Human Development and Services Expands Access to GED Instruction

GBRLC has partnered with the City-Parish Division of Human Development and Services to offer clients of the Office of Social Services (OSS) access to GED and adult basic education classes at four sites. Adult Literacy Advocates, Literacy Works, St. Paul Adult Learning Center, and the YWCA, Center for Family Empowerment began accepting referrals in June, and the classes quickly filled to capacity. Funding for the project comes from stimulus funds of the Community Service Block Grant Program, but unfortunately ends September 30, 2010. Despite the project's short duration, students are receiving the additional benefits of case management, bus transportation, and childcare as needed. David Jones, Director of St. Paul Adult Learning Center describes the project as a true blessing for students.

"This grant addresses the common barriers adult learners have that adult literacy site directors have recognized for years," David said. "Most of our students come from inner-city, single parent homes, where lack of transportation and childcare prevent continual access to classes. The OSS program eliminates these two issues while supplying students with targeted case management services." David notes that the case manager assigned to his students at St. Paul's comes daily to meet with students and assess their needs, and she also calls students who have not been able to attend classes.

"She is filling gaps for us, and for the students," David said. "Her intervention can help students who are at risk for dropping out of the program solve other challenges that are preventing them from coming to class. Clearly, the more serious we are about addressing these barriers, the more successful our programs and our students will be."

David contrasts the benefits of the OSS-funded program with the challenges students in his regular program face. "One of our students has been to class only once this month, due to a mix-up with her childcare credit. She has no one else to watch her children."

David anticipates, though, that the real issues for all his students will come when older children who may have been helping supervise younger siblings return to school in August. Without a schedule allowing for parents' work and childcare commitments, as well as their transportation challenges, the parents will be hard-pressed to attend GED classes regularly.

David wishes that the program could have more longevity. "Four months is not enough time for most students to prepare for taking and passing the GED test. What will happen to these students after September?"

Our State Leaders See the Long-Term Impact of Adult Literacy Services:

Governor Jindal and Alan Levine (Louisiana's outgoing health secretary) "believe that the one thing that can be done to improve children's well-being in Louisiana is to improve the economic opportunity of their parents." (Alan Levine, quoted in the Times-Picayune, July 27, 2010)

Baton Rouge's 2010 One Book One Community Author Event Draws Huge Crowd

On July 29, an estimated 500 readers filled LSU's Cox Communications Center for Student Athletes to meet author Neil White and several of his friends about whom he wrote. White's book, [In the Sanctuary of Outcasts](#), was chosen as the 2010 One Book One Community Summer Selection, and White heartily thanked the audience for welcoming him to Baton Rouge and for taking the time to read his memoir. John Grisham has described White's book as, "A remarkable story of a young man's loss of everything he deemed important, and his ultimate discovery that redemption can be taught by society's most dreaded outcasts." In humorous and touching narrative, White details the time he spent incarcerated as a federal prisoner onsite at Carville, Louisiana, living side by side with persons affected by Hansen's disease. Special guests that joined White for the author event were Fr. Reynolds, the Franciscan priest who welcomed White at Carville, Harry, a Carville resident, BB Blanchard, a local high school student who had Hansen's disease, and numerous other friends that worked at Carville, served time there or otherwise helped White during his time there and with his book research.

While signing books, White described to Debbie O'Connor, GBRLC Executive Director, his experience teaching GED class at Carville to other inmates. Having worked in publishing, he felt prepared to teach reading. "I was certain I could teach them enough to pass a high school equivalency test. Never one to set the bar low, I had a secret goal of 100 percent graduation." On day one, he had a student ask him what a vowel was. White related to O'Connor, "When this student, a former union boss in New Jersey who signed contracts for millions of dollars, asked me this, I realized that my goal was much too high." White added, "Even when someone manages to hide it, a lack of literacy haunts them. As ignorant as we may think these people to be, we are just as ignorant about their struggles, an experience we haven't had since we were four or five years old and couldn't read ourselves."

White suggested that, for people to really understand the reality of adult literacy, they should view it in action. "Sit in a class for an hour," White said, "and see it for yourself!"



GBRLC has been honored to partner this third year with OBOC and looks forward to 2011 to help promote the One Book spring and summer selections. Want to stay up to date on the book selections and help promote reading and discussion in Baton Rouge? Visit www.readonebook.org and sign up to receive email notifications!

Volunteer Spotlight – Georgia Wilemon Called to Serve at St. Paul Adult Learning Center

Georgia Wilemon came to volunteer at St. Paul Adult Learning Center in 2004 in a rather extraordinary way. She recalls shopping at a local Catholic book store and stopping to ask the cashier about a particular item. "I grew up Baptist," she said, "and I wanted to know more about a miraculous medal." The cashier referred her to two knowledgeable Catholic ladies who happened to be in the store. "When I was introduced to them," Georgia said, "I learned that the women were nuns: Sisters Lori and Kathleen, the founders of St. Paul Adult Learning Center." Upon hearing that Georgia had recently retired as the legal advisor for the Baton Rouge Police Department and that she was seeking a volunteer opportunity, the Sisters invited Georgia that day to follow them to St. Paul's to meet the staff and students.

There, Georgia found the volunteer opportunity that captured and sustains her passion for serving the teenagers and young adults enrolled at the adult learning center. Her first role was tutoring students in science and social studies, sometimes one-on-one and other times in small groups. She continues tutoring students in math while serving a fourth year on St. Paul's Board of Directors.

"My passion is tutoring," Georgia said. "Nothing gives me more pure pleasure in life than to be working one-on-one with a kid on, say, reducing fractions, and to hear that teenager say, 'Oh, I get it now.' To see that proud smile just makes my day."

Georgia said she especially likes working with students in small groups, because the students encourage one another. "It is difficult, though," she said, "placing students in groups for tutoring, as they enter the center with different levels of subject mastery." Georgia happily serves on the Board, but she said it can be daunting facing the funding challenges presented to St. Paul's.

In the six years Georgia has volunteered at St. Paul's, she's seen several changes, with the most significant being the huge increase in the enrollment of high school aged students. "St. Paul's always has a waiting list," Georgia said. "So many young people are in need because they have already dropped out of high school or are still enrolled but struggling."

St. Paul's, however, with its small student body, staff and loyal volunteers, has a magnetism of its own that tends to draw in and retain students so that they complete their GEDs and enter postsecondary education or job training programs. "David Jones and his wife Stephanie are so dedicated," Georgia said. "They have eight children of their own, yet they give so much of themselves to the students. They are great role models. I am inspired to continue serving," Georgia said, "in part because of their commitment to the mission of St. Paul's."

Want to know more about volunteering with adult literacy?

Stop by our Volunteer Fair Sunday, Sept. 12, at East Baton Rouge Parish Main Library, 7711 Goodwood Blvd., between 2 and 4 p.m.

Or, email marie@brac.org or call 381-7129. Your skills are needed and welcomed!

Connecting Incarceration and Literacy

Each year in Louisiana, about 15,000 people are incarcerated. Louisiana has the highest incarceration rate in the world for its population. Most of the people who enter Louisiana prisons have fourth- and fifth-grade educations.

Special Thanks from January through July:

Thank You to Credit Bureau of Baton Rouge Foundation for supporting the local match requirement of GBRLC's federal Compassion Capital Fund grant.

Thank You to Rotary District Foundation for a grant to renew software licenses for GBRLC's portable lab. The grant also supplies homework kits that providers may distribute to students who cannot attend class for a period of time.

Thank You to Rotary Club of Baton Rouge for its ongoing support.

Thank You to ExxonMobil for contributing general operating support and for sponsoring Literacy Week 2010.

Thank You to Lynn and Felix Weill for replacing a GBRLC office computer.

Thank You to Barbara Auten and her staff at Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area for hosting our CCF trainings with Vicki Clark on May 26 and 27. GBRLC's staff and principal members, as well as Board Directors from their literacy centers, enjoyed the opportunity to learn together in such a bright, accommodating space.

Thank You to Family and Friends of Harriet Neville Limper, who donated to GBRLC in her memory.

Three New Directors Join GBRLC's Board

Thank you and welcome to GBRLC new Board Directors:

Mike Pitts, VP of Tax for Amedisys, who serves as Board Treasurer; David Jones, Executive Director of St. Paul Adult Learning Center; and Gary Robertson, Instructor at Adult Literacy Advocates.

We look forward to working with you!

Many Thanks to:

Willie Johnson for her service as GBRLC Board Chair from February 2009 through June 2010.

We are so grateful for your dedication and leadership!



Chase Community Giving Campaign Nets 108 Votes for GBRLC on Facebook!

Thank you to all who voted for GBRLC in June and July in [the Chase Community Giving Campaign on Facebook!](#) We appreciate you showing your support for us in our first experience with an online giving campaign. While we did not receive a donation from Chase, we are most grateful for the publicity we received, including new GBRLC membership requests, and for the opportunity to introduce ourselves on Facebook.

If you like, you can "Like" GBRLC and stay up to date on our news and events!

From Outgoing Board Chair Willie Johnson:

"Besides having good physical and mental health, the ability to read and write is essential to having a good quality of life. My work and leadership with the GBR Literacy Coalition is but a small way to help those in need of a better quality of life."

Willie, who is retired from Baton Rouge Area Chamber, continues to serve as a Board Director with GBRLC.

From Incoming Board Chair Brian Stagg:

"Being GBRLC Chairman is personal to me. Most of us have opportunities in life to pursue making a difference. Not realizing it at the time, such was the case for me in 2004 with being asked to co-chair a Rotary project. As a result, and due to others including our Board members Sophie Gibson and Felix Weil, here we are today.

Recently, I was going through family memorabilia. A December, 1965 article in the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce Bulletin reported a talk by my Dad given at the annual meeting of the St. Bernard Council Chamber. He said in part, 'One of the pressing matters is that of adult literacy. The fact that we rank worst in the nation on this score has a bearing on the willingness of industry to invest here. Our poor condition has caused some to pass us over for fear we are not able to supply good labor. Sooner or later we are going to have to do something about better education for our students who either don't plan to go to college or who would not do well in college. Some states are ahead of us in technical training for high school youths, and this is something that is helping them grow economically.' So in addition to the many significant reasons our Board is committed to our mission for the benefit of our citizens, I also hope for us together to carry on effectively addressing the concern expressed in 1965 by Ed Stagg."

Please [contact us](#) if you would like us to bring literacy resources to your community event!