



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Contact:**

Laura Castelli  
518-689-7223 (work)  
518-225-8993 (cell)  
lcastelli@corningplace.com

## **Rochester Advocates Hold Press Conference to Denounce Adult Literacy Cuts**

Rochester, N.Y. – Students, volunteer tutors and administrators from regional Literacy Volunteers programs will hold a press conference to oppose the 40-percent proposed budget cut to statewide and local adult literacy programs.

*Details of the press conference are as follows:*

**Who:** Literacy New York (LNY)  
Literacy Volunteers of Rochester  
Literacy Volunteers of Ontario – Yates (LVOY)  
Literacy Volunteers of America – Steuben County

**Where:** Office of Literacy Volunteers of Rochester  
Cornell Cooperative Extension Monroe County  
249 Highland Ave.  
Rochester, NY 14620

**When:** Thursday, April 15, 2010  
2:30 p.m.

The current state budget proposals would cut more than \$2 million – or about one-third of all state funding – to literacy assistance programs across New York. This cut is in addition to a \$612,000 cut under the 2009-10 Deficit Reduction Plan (DRP). With last year’s DRP reduction of funding, literacy programs throughout the state are now faced with a nearly 40 percent potential cut from last year’s funding level.

“This program is a necessity for so many,” said Kevin Smith, executive director of Literacy New York. “Twenty-two percent of New Yorkers are below basic literacy level, yet our one-on-one volunteer program helps thousands of New Yorkers every year. Not only does it provide the support and educational services our adult students need for today’s workforce, it also provides the knowledge and opportunity so that they can help their children and grandchildren succeed in the future.”

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*Since 1977, Literacy New York (LNY) has been a leading advocate for adult literacy in New York State and nationally. Literacy New York provides technical, program, and training assistance and workshops to a network of 37 local, community-based affiliates who annually provide over 400,000 hours of reading and basic skills instruction to adult learners.*

*Literacy Volunteers of Rochester, Inc. is an organization of trained volunteers dedicated to providing one-to-one or small group tutoring to functionally illiterate adults and to others lacking English language skills, and to fostering literacy in the greater Rochester NY area. Our services are provided free of charge. We generally accept into the program students who read below an eighth grade reading level. Among speakers of other languages, emphasis is placed on the newcomer whose need for English is urgent and whose level is low.*

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*Since 1967, the forerunner of **Literacy Volunteers Ontario - Yates**, the Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County, Inc. (New York) offered free and confidential one-to-one tutoring help to adults who want to improve their reading, writing, and English-speaking skills. On February 18, 2009, Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County expanded its program to also include Literacy Volunteers of Yates County (New York). The combined name is Literacy Volunteers Ontario - Yates (LVOY).*