

**History of Literacy New York**

For **50 years**, Literacy New York has supported community-based literacy programs and adult education teachers working with New Yorkers lacking the basic skills to succeed! These are adults who want an opportunity to help themselves and their families, and the work of Literacy New York allows that opportunity.

Literacy New York grew out of the Literacy Volunteer movement that began in Syracuse, New York with Ruth Colvin.

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* In 1961, Ruth discovered that 11,000 Adults in Syracuse could not read or write at a functional level.
* Spurred to action, she created Literacy Volunteers of America to train community members as volunteer tutors to teach adults to read.

**The growth of the program was explosive.**

**The recognition that illiteracy was a problem that affected every segment of society dawned on people throughout the US and was highlighted in President John F. Kennedy’s 1962 State of the Union address.**

In 1974, Literacy Volunteers of America - New York State was founded to support the growing number of local Literacy Volunteer programs. 30 years later, Literacy Volunteers of America-New York State changed its name to Literacy New York (LNY).

Investment in adult education results in higher salaries, enhanced job security, greater business productivity, increased consumer spending, increased tax revenues, reduced correctional costs and decreased drain on social program services. In addition, parents are better able to support their child's education, and lead healthier, more productive and engaged lives.

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| **Impact of Adult Literacy Programs** | | |
| **Individual Impact** |  | **Community Impact** |
| Adult Students attending programs achieve dramatic income growth |  | Individual income growth leads to increased tax contributions |
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| Some program attendees earn the High School Equivalency (HSE) credential |  | HSE attainment leads to an improved labor force and greater earning potential |
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| Adult Literacy Programs promote overall literacy growth |  | Higher literacy levels for adults lead to improved literacy for their children |
| **Source** - [**ProLiteracy: The Case for Investment in Adult Education**](https://www.proliteracy.org/Portals/0/Reder%20Research.pdf?ver=2017-03-24-151533-647) | | |

The services of Literacy New York help to build capacity in adult literacy programs and adult education agencies, enabling them to produce positive outcomes.

Our programs and projects:

Support and Technical Assistance Center (STAC), Rest of State NY:

Literacy NY, in our role as the Rest of State STAC, provides support and technical assistance to about 40 sites across the state that provide literacy services in their communities. Many programs utilize the skills of community volunteers in providing instruction. Our services include assistance with navigating the NYS grant system, the provision of high-quality resources to the field, and the specific supports listed below:

* Intake to Outcomes (I2O) - For programs that use volunteer tutors, our I2O platform allows programs to offer tutor training "on demand” to potential volunteers. Workshops are asynchronous, so tutors can complete them on their own schedules. Literacy NY supports participants through their training and provides programs with tutors who are ready to work with adult students.
* Program Data Support – We work with state-contracted programs to be sure that their program data is clean and accurate and follows NYS guidance. Quality data shows the great work programs are doing in their communities- we help them tell their stories.

# Janice Cuddahee Fund – Founded in September 2019, the Janice Cuddahee Fund was created to honor the memory of a literacy advocate who enjoyed a long career with Literacy New York (LNY), culminating in her leading the organization as Executive Director.The Fund provides deserving adult literacy programs free tutor training workshops to train volunteer tutors to teach Reading Basics, Language Basics (serving English Language Learners), Math, Citizenship Coaching and/or Employability Soft Skills, by utilizing the Intake to Outcomes (I2O) platform.

# Advocacy – Our role at Literacy New York is to raise public awareness of the issue of adult literacy, work to increase funding for programs, expand programming, and promote effective public policy. Our efforts are ongoing, and we take every opportunity we can to talk about the needs of adults with low literacy skills and the programs that serve them.

# Online Tutor Training – Literacy NY has expanded our work in online tutor training provision, developing and marketing online tutor training to adult literacy programs across the country. Building a “for-profit” arm further strengthens the organization while allowing us to continue to follow our vision and mission.