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Weathering the Storm with Resolve

Like many nonprofit organizations, Literacy Pittsburgh has not received its state and federally contracted funds yet this year due to the budget impasse at both levels. However, we remain focused on our mission of creating better lives through learning. Thanks to the steadfast generosity of individual, corporate, and foundation donors, we are weathering this uncertainty.

Our teachers and volunteer tutors are serving more students than a year ago, with 275 on the waiting list. Student employment, post-secondary, and high-school equivalency attainment are all ahead compared to a year ago as well. The tenacity and resilience of our students and the generosity of our volunteers and donors strengthen our resolve.

We continue to develop and implement new opportunities for our students to achieve success. Watch your mailbox over the next several weeks for *The Spark*, the print version of our monthly e-newsletter. This will be our annual report issue, packed with information on program expansions, neighborhood news, financial and program data, and student accomplishments.

We recently welcomed three new members of our Board of Directors who are excited to support our students' efforts: Kevin Brand, Community Volunteer, Nancy Marshall, BNY Wealth Global Family Office Group, and Shahfar Shaari, Lead First.

Literacy Pittsburgh continues to move forward. We are more determined than ever to do what we can, while we can, to make a difference in our community.

Donor Spotlight: Art Rectenwald



For Art Rectenwald, supporting Literacy Pittsburgh is both a personal and a professional commitment. As founder and CEO of Rectenwald Brothers Construction—a national leader in commercial construction—Art has built more than just buildings. He’s built a business grounded in hard work, relationships, and opportunity.

With a workforce that includes many immigrant employees, he understands firsthand how literacy skills can open doors. When he connected with Literacy Pittsburgh through CEO Carey Harris, the mission struck a chord. “Supporting literacy means supporting opportunity,” he shared.

That same belief in opportunity inspired Rectenwald Brothers to sponsor the Market and Café at our One Big Table event. It was a natural fit. Art’s wife, Irina, who was born and raised in Uzbekistan, has a deep passion for food and culture. Their shared appreciation for global flavors and cultures made the event feel personal. By helping small and immigrant-owned businesses shine, their sponsorship was more than support—it was a celebration.

Founded in 1984, Rectenwald Brothers has grown into a trusted construction partner for national brands and Fortune 500 companies. But for Art, giving back locally is just as important. His support of Literacy Pittsburgh reflects a simple but powerful belief: when people have the tools to succeed, the entire community thrives. “It just felt right,” he said. “This work matters.”

Give Big, Pittsburgh!

Mark your calendar for “Give Big, Pittsburgh!” Pittsburgh’s annual charitable donation event on Giving Tuesday falls on December 2 this year. Literacy Pittsburgh will be participating once again in this exciting fundraiser. You can help make the holidays extra special for Literacy Pittsburgh’s students and provide them with the tools they need to achieve their goals.

On December 2, just visit givebigpittsburgh.com and make a donation to [Literacy Pittsburgh](https://literacypittsburgh.org) (or to any of the other great nonprofit organizations that are participating). The event will last for 24 hours only!

Here is what you can do:

- Make a donation at our [Give Big Pittsburgh profile page](#) on December 2 at any time between 12:00 AM and 11:59 PM.
- Spread the word! Text a friend, forward this email, or post on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using the hashtag #GiveBigPittsburgh. Or you can just tell someone in person – that works, too!

Double the impact of your gift! Thanks to a generous matching gift from a local family foundation, all gifts to Literacy Pittsburgh made on Tuesday, December 2 (or anytime in November or December) will be matched 100%. A gift of \$25

becomes \$50, \$100 becomes \$200, and \$250 becomes \$500.

Please ask your friends and family members to join you in helping to make a difference in our students' lives.



Tutor Conference Recap

On Saturday, November 1, Literacy Pittsburgh hosted its bi-annual Tutor Conference on Zoom. Sixty volunteers took time out of their busy schedules to learn more about tutoring strategies and tips.

Chief Executive Officer Carey Harris and Chief Program Officer Lori Como opened the day with a plenary session. This session on the current state of adult education was recorded and can be watched on our [Tutor YouTube channel](#). Additional sessions included: Using the Color Vowel® Chart to Teach Phonics; Life with Career Services; Effective Online Tutoring; Interactive Math Tools for Students, presented by an outside speaker, Amanda Ruth; Using Dictionaries and Translation Technology; and an interactive discussion session of scenarios tutors may experience.

Here's what some tutors had to say about our Fall Conference:

"It was well-done and gave me new ideas and resources. I always love hearing from other tutors."

"I enjoyed the feedback from other tutors on the challenges they see and how they approach them."

"As a new tutor, I liked getting the information on the memberships to the state and federal groups. It was helpful to hear the other tutors' experiences with their clients in the breakout sessions."

Thank you to all the tutors that attended, to the Literacy Pittsburgh staff for planning and implementing our conference, and to our outside speaker for sharing their expertise!

All Access Feature Filmed at Literacy Pittsburgh

We were excited to host a film crew from *All Access with Host Andy Garcia* last month. They visited our classes and interviewed CEO Carey Harris, College and Career Readiness Manager Luke Fredland, and star student Angeli (l), pictured with our Director of Marketing and Communications, Maria Polinsky (r). We also filmed at Noble Asian Market, a store owned by one of our former students. The segment will air nationally on PBS. Keep an eye on our social media for the air date!



Spotlight on Success: Yeraldin



Yeraldin moved to the United States from Colombia in May 2022. She came here through a cultural exchange program called Au Pair. Yeraldin sought to expand her knowledge, experience American culture, and improve her English. Her now wife joined her here through the same program.

“What I like best about Pittsburgh is that it’s a city full of opportunities,” Yeraldin says. It’s very beautiful and there’s always something to do. It has a strong and welcoming community.” [Keep reading](#)

Amazon Wishlist: Snacks and Essentials for Students

Help us stock our student kitchen with snacks and other essentials to help keep students focused and learning. We encourage you to check our

Amazon wishlist, which includes kitchen items and our free cabinet that is open to all students. Thank you!

AMAZON WISHLIST

Sign Up for Our Next Introductory Tutor Training

[Learn more](#) about becoming a volunteer adult literacy tutor and register for training.

In-Person Workshop

Thursday, December 4
10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Sewickley Public Library
500 Thorn Street
Sewickley, PA 15143

In-Person Workshop

Saturday, December 6
11:00 am – 1:00 pm
Dormont Public Library
2950 West Liberty Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15216

Test Your Knowledge of November

Our students study many U.S. events and people in our Civics classes in preparation for the U.S. citizenship interview. See how much you know about history in November.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE



Support Literacy Pittsburgh with your purchase of comfy tees, cozy sweatshirts, and other cool merch. 10% of each purchase will help our students to succeed. Visit our merch store.

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