Also: Money Matters Recap, Celebrating Milestones Anniversaries, Volunteer Spotlight, and more!

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The SPARK Online

LITERACY PITTSBURGH

Get Ready to Give Big on December 1!



Literacy Pittsburgh is excited to participate in the 10th anniversary of Give Big Pittsburgh. Give Big, is a community-wide giving day that supports local nonprofits across our region.

This year, your support is more important than ever. While federal funding for Adult Education remains at risk, demand for Literacy Pittsburgh's programs continues to grow. Every day our students come ready to learn and change their lives with the support of our staff and community that believes in them every day.

On December 1st, you can help us reach our $13,000 Give Big goal and ensure more adult learners have access to the resources and skills they need to succeed.

Here are a few meaningful ways you can help:

- Save the date and make a gift through our Give Big Page
- Share our campaign page with family and friends
- Create a peer-to-peer fundraiser and encourage others to join you in supporting adult learners

And this year all gifts made in December will be matched dollar-for-dollar, thanks to a generous local family foundation. That means your support can have twice the impact, helping us serve more students.

Whether you make a gift, start a peer fundraiser, or help spread the word about this year's Give Big Pittsburgh, you are helping to build better lives through learning.

Learn more and support Literacy Pittsburgh's Give Big campaign here.

Three Honors, One Shared Commitment to Opportunity

We're celebrating recognition from two valued partners this month, as well as a national award for our e-newsletter! These honors highlight Literacy Pittsburgh's work connecting people with education, training, and meaningful careers while effectively communicating the results of these efforts.



Outstanding Community Impact Award from CAEL

The Council on Adult Experiential Learning (CAEL) honored Literacy Pittsburgh at its national conference, held in Pittsburgh this year. The award celebrates local leaders and innovators in higher education and workforce development, with a special focus this year on the Pittsburgh region. Through My Career Forward, we're working with CAEL to connect people with education, training, and work—helping turn career goals into opportunities.



Rising Partner Champion recognition from UPMC

UPMC recognized Literacy Pittsburgh at its Regional Community Champions breakfast. The Rising Partner Champion Award celebrates emerging partnerships that show strong potential, momentum, and innovation.

Our partnership with UPMC connects students' basic skills education with occupational training and career opportunities in the UPMC health system.

2026 Anthem Awards

Literacy Pittsburgh's e-newsletter *The Spark Online* was recently honored with a Gold Award in the Content & Media (Nonprofit) category. This award recognizes outstanding email or newsletter.

The Spark Online goes to approximately 5,000 donors, partners, volunteers, and friends. The nomination described the purpose of the newsletter and outlined metrics such as our average open rate of 57% over the past 12 months - well above the industry average.

Students Gain Financial Literacy Skills at Money Matters



Money Matters, held on October 21, 2026, at Literacy Pittsburgh's Downtown Center, provided adult learners with an opportunity to strengthen their financial literacy skills through hands on learning and discussion. Participants explored essential topics including budgeting, saving, credit, banking, debt management, and strategies for handling personal finances. The event connected learners with practical resources and information designed to support financial stability and informed decision making.

Partners from BNY offered individualized financial coaching sessions, and representatives from NexTier Bank were available to assist interested participants with opening free checking accounts.

In addition to educational coaching opportunities, participants enjoyed music, food, and raffle prizes,

creating a welcoming and engaging environment for learning. The event highlighted the connection between financial literacy and long term educational, career, and personal success. Learners were encouraged to ask questions, share experiences, and apply what they learned to real life situations. By bringing together staff, learners, tutors, and community partners, Money Matters reinforced the value of providing support that helps individuals build skills, confidence, and pathways toward their goals.

Volunteer Spotlight: Bill Campbell



With 25 years of volunteer experience with Literacy Pittsburgh, Bill Campbell has no intention of stopping any time soon.

When he came to Literacy Pittsburgh in 2001, Bill had no prior connection to adult education or workforce development. His professional career was spent in the manufacturing sector, where he advanced into leadership roles. Beginning as an auditor at US Steel Corporation, Bill worked in the financial and managerial sides of operations before moving to Aristech Chemical, a spinoff of US Steel, where he finished his professional career.

As retirement approached, Bill knew he wanted to find purpose in serving his community, and he found just the opportunity with Literacy Pittsburgh. With a deep love for our region and a longstanding interest in other cultures and languages, becoming an English Language Learning tutor seemed like a perfect path.

In the 25 years Bill has volunteered with the organization; over 250 students have passed through his classes. Keep reading

Behind the Scenes: EL Civics Class

Walk into an EL Civics class at Literacy Pittsburgh, and you might see learners discussing a moment in history, evaluating online sources for reliability, learning what to bring to apply for a learner's permit, or practicing English phrases to prepare for a field trip in their community.

EL Civics is Literacy Pittsburgh's new Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) program. It serves high intermediate and advanced English learners with goals related to careers, postsecondary education, and civic and community participation. Classes meet in person and on Zoom in the mornings, afternoons, and evenings.

In the classroom, instructors connect language learning to community life through field trips, discussions about U.S. civics processes, and digital skills practice. Keep reading

Celebrating Milestone Anniversaries

We are pleased to recognize two of our staff members, Amanda Kmetz and Caitlin Griffiths, for their dedicated service to Literacy Pittsburgh.



Amanda Kmetz, English Language Learning Instructor
5 years of Service

During her five years at Literacy Pittsburgh, Amanda has played a key role in expanding learning opportunities by creating two brand-new courses from scratch: English for Business and English for Academics.

“It's been great making better lives through learning for the last five years!” Amanda says.



Caitlin Griffiths, Director of Child and Family Programs
10 Years of Service

"I am lucky for getting to work in Family Literacy because I get to watch families put down roots in Pittsburgh and grow as part of the community while building these incredible relationships with their children, their teachers, and the community as a whole," Caitlin explains. "The families we serve often teach us more than we teach them, and I feel honored to get to work with them."

Keep reading to learn more Amanda and Caitlin

Welcome New Staff: October 2026

We are pleased to welcome the following new faces to our team:



Amy Reuveni
Tutoring Specialist



Christina McElwee
College and Career Readiness Instructor

Sign Up for Our Next Introductory Tutor Training!

Learn more about becoming a volunteer adult literacy tutor and register for training.

Introductory Tutor Training: Teaching Adult Learners

Saturday, December 5
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
Penn Hills Library
1037 Stotler Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Introductory Tutor Training: Teaching Adult Learners

Wednesday, December 9
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM
Dormont Public Library
2950 W Liberty Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15216

Why We Do the Work We Do 📖 📝 🎉

> At Literacy Pittsburgh, Mario studied English for Academics for 18 months with teacher Amanda. He explains, “Her patience and dedication helped me gain confidence in reading, writing, and speaking English.” **Literacy Pittsburgh Student**

Thank you to Highmark Wholecare for sponsorship of *The Spark Online.*



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