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Seeds of Literacy
3104 W. 25th Street, 3rd Floor
Cleveland, Ohio 44109

Our Mission

To provide personalized education that empowers adults to succeed in their communities.

Designer: Andrea Vagas

Education, & Employment, & POVERTY

People with **poor literacy skills** are **more than twice as likely** to be **unemployed**.



The **greatest reduction** in the risk of **poverty** happens when a **high school** credential is earned.



Education has **more effect on earnings** over a 40-year period than factors like gender or race.





the SEED

Hard Work & Great Help

By Kimberly Rush

Michelle Pagan is a hard worker. If there's one point this story needs to emphasize, it is that. Michelle works hard. Each and every day. Suffering from a serious accident at work in 2012, where she had a traumatic brain injury, Michelle has had to relearn everything: how to write, speak, do math and science, and even how to be social settings. She has her beloved service dog to help her out, but it's her hard work and determination that will carry her far in this life. And her tutors at Seeds of Literacy.

Michelle comes to Seeds of Literacy diligently, often staying for multiple sessions, or long after her tutoring session is complete. She works on homework, enjoying the extra help the tutors can provide but also the social interaction and the warm, positive environment this space holds. "Seeds is like my family. Every day I come in and learn something, even if it's not in a book. They talk to me about everything and are so patient and kind. I want to be just like that," Michelle says. "The best thing about the tutors is their patience. They deal with so many personalities, and that takes skill. And, at the end of the sessions, everyone walks out with a smile on their face."

Seeds tutors come from different backgrounds –businesspeople, college students, retired teachers – and Seeds holds monthly tutor training sessions. Most tutors make a commitment to tutor one,

“

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”

two-hour class session per week, and may choose morning, afternoon or evening sessions for maximum flexibility.

Michelle's next goal is to become a Seeds tutor, giving back to the place that has given so much to her. When she talks about Seeds, her eyes glisten with tears that threaten to overflow. "My goal is to help someone else 'get it' the way these tutors have helped me," Michelle explains. Amazingly, Michelle has accomplished more here than throughout her occupational therapy sessions, having regained more of her memory and relearning social skills. "The doctors said it wouldn't happen for me, but here I am."

To learn more about Seeds of Literacy, contact Jo Steigerwald, Development Officer, at 216-661-7950 or josteigerwald@seedsofliteracy.org.



Michelle Pagan

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Bonnie Entler, Executive Director

Executive Director's Message: Expansion East!

Friends, we are very excited to share some amazing news with you: Seeds will be opening a sister site on Cleveland's east side this September! Seeds East will be located at 13815 Kinsman Road, at the corner of East 139th Street and Kinsman, in the Mt. Pleasant Family Services Building.

Since 2009, east side residents and agencies have asked Seeds to open a site near them, where neighborhoods are tremendously underserved. Adult functional illiteracy rates range from 85% – 97%, so the vast majority of residents in these neighborhoods have 3rd and 4th grade math and reading skills. This educational deficit widens the opportunity gap, increasing the distance to higher education and better jobs.

In April 2014, we learned the Ohio Adult Basic Literacy and Education (ABLE) program had an open RFP cycle, its first in over 5 years. With the east side needs in mind, we requested funding to open a site in the Mt. Pleasant neighborhood - a longshot, since ABLE had not funded any new programs in 10+ years. In

preparation, Seeds gained the support of Cleveland City Councilmen Zack Reed and Terrell Pruitt.

Our longshot paid off. ABLE awarded us \$101,000 to help open the east side site, and the Saint Luke's Foundation granted us \$20,000. We are actively raising funds to meet the costs of this new site; a year's operational costs for the site will be nearly \$200,000. This is a worthwhile investment in a community that greatly needs our services. I encourage the Seeds network of friends to support us financially in this project.

For those interested in tutoring opportunities, we welcome new tutors at both Seeds East and Seeds West. Tutor training sessions are held monthly; please check our website or call for dates.

As always, you are welcome to visit Seeds at your convenience. We'd love to see you soon.

Bonnie Entler



Bob Lyle

Volunteer Spotlight: Bob Lyle

Modest and hardworking. Those are the first two words that come to mind after meeting Bob Lyle, a tutor for Seeds of Literacy. Bob came to Seeds after a long career as a CPA in the business world, and after traveling out of the country on several mission trips. Now back in the U.S., Bob sees Seeds as an extension of his faith. It is how he has been called to serve. "There are a lot of ways to serve others, and this is mine. There is no better way I could send my time," Bob explains.

"My want to be here was initiated and driven by faith, but there are many earthly and human reasons why I do this," says Bob, and he goes on to list several. He loves working one-on-one with the students and building a rapport and connection with them. He gets inspired seeing people work toward their goals, and feeds off of the positive, friendly environment and atmosphere of the Seeds classroom. Bob enjoys the friendships he's made with the students and fellow volunteers, and felt immediately at home here, going on to say, "from day one, I just loved it."

Bob finds it gratifying to watch students grasp concepts and move up levels in the lessons. To him, it's inspiring to witness growth and change, and simply to see students working so hard. "They're here voluntarily, and despite busy lives, they all make the time to be here," he explains.

Bob drives one hour each way. Most would think this is a long commute, yet he's not bothered by it. In fact, on the way home, he reflects on the day and is always completely fulfilled. "I do it because I need to do it. I want to do it. If you give, you get more back. I find tutoring and the social interaction that comes with that to be extremely enjoyable and stimulating. As soon as the class sessions end on Thursday, my excitement and anticipation turn toward looking forward to Monday when the sessions resume."

If you are interested in sharing your talents with Seeds, please contact Alexandria Marshall, Volunteer Coordinator, at 216.661.7950.

By Kimberly Rush

■ The BIG News

Seeds is proud to announce the opening of its new east side location at 13815 Kinsman Road (corner of East 139th Street and Kinsman) on September 24, 2014. Class sessions will be Monday-Thursday, 9 am – 11 am and 1 pm – 3 pm. Registration will be held every Wednesday and Thursday. There is free, secure parking, building security, and easy access to public transportation. Tutors and students are welcome and needed! Call 216.661.7950 for more information.

■ Sowing Seeds of Hope

Our 14th Annual Benefit Brunch and Auction will be held on Sunday, October 19, 2014 from 11 am to 2 pm at Westwood Country Club. Join Seeds of Literacy in



celebrating and supporting student success with a delicious brunch, live and silent auctions, scholarship rally, and inspirational student stories. All proceeds benefit student instruction. Tickets start at \$45. Contact Bonnie Entler at 216.661.7950 or bonnieentler@seedsofliteracy.org for more information.

“What’s Going On in That Computer Lab?”

By Dan McLaughlin

Seeds of Literacy offers students a host of new educational options from the Seeds computer lab. From learning basic digital literacy skills, to reviewing content for the GED® exam, to preparing for a job search, here’s a few of the ways students have been using the lab:

Basic Computer Skills Lessons – students practice their basic computer skills (like using a mouse & keyboard) and build skills up to **earn a Basic Computer Skills Certificate**. Students may use this certificate for job interviews to show that they know how to use a computer. As of this writing, 31 Seeds students have earned their Basic Computer Skills Certificate.

Advanced Computer Skills Lessons – students practice more advanced computer skills, like using the Internet to find information, using Windows 7 and using email. **Students may earn more certificates** to make themselves more attractive to employers. So far, Seeds students have earned another 25 of these advanced digital literacy certificates.

Typing Practice - to pass the Language Arts and Social Studies parts of the GED test, students will need to be able to type a timed essay. This is not easy to do if one has low typing skills. We recommend that students **try to spend 10-15 minutes a day typing** ... practice makes perfect!

Practice Math Skills With Khan Academy – Khan Academy is a great way for students to **review math skills and get extra practice on any kind of math!** It also looks a lot like the GED Math test, making it an opportunity for extra preparation.

Official GED Practice Tests – Seeds is now able to offer GED Ready, the official GED Practice Test, which offers an excellent way to prepare for the exam. **Sample questions in all four areas are available**, and the test makes specific content recommendations for students to score higher.

■ In Memory

Art Zammikiel, a dedicated Seeds tutor for over 12 years, passed away on April 9, 2014. Art was exceptionally warm-hearted, and a kind and steady force for our students. We loved that he was always willing to try new ways of helping students learn. We miss Art, and send sympathy to his family.

■ New Investment in Seeds

Over the past few months, Seeds has received funding from several new sources: the United Way of Greater Cleveland, The City of Cleveland Mayor’s Office, and the Ohio Board of Regents. We thank our students, tutors, and staff for making our program such a successful investment.

■ Thanks to Solon Rotary & Steve Prenalger

Seeds thanks the members of the Rotary Club of Solon and Board Member/Seeds Graduate Steven Prenalger for underwriting the cost of our new Townsend Library. This is a collection of books written for adults and coded by Lexile level, a score that corresponds with a student’s reading level.

■ Court Community Service Award

Seeds was named the 2014 winner of the Ronald B. Adrine Award, recognizing an organization “that demonstrates the qualities of creativity and leadership in the support and promotion of community service sentencing and the benefits it provides to our community.” We work with around 200 court community participants a year, who help us with everything from grading student work to housekeeping and student recruitment.

■ Employee News

Dan McLaughlin, Program Officer, and Chris Richards, Site Coordinator, attended the national conference of the Commission on Adult Basic Education, held in March in Pittsburgh. This was a great opportunity for Seeds to learn about national trends and program methods in the adult literacy world.