

# VIRTUAL CLASSROOM





Virtual *Thrive!*  
Fall 2020  
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**Seeds of Literacy**



# Dear Friends,

A NEW, VIRTUAL NORMAL 2020-2021 • *December 31, 2021* •

The last Annual Report was published at the pandemic's onset, before we really knew what was to come.

The classrooms closed in March 2020. Our summer, fall, AND winter reopening plans were delayed. We finally stopped announcing dates and had to tell frustrated students that even though we could solve a quadratic equation with them, something as simple as declaring a reopening date was now impossible.

Initially we offered remote lessons to fill a brief gap while on-site learning was suspended. These lessons were a far cry from the interactive tutoring for which Seed is known. As it became more clear that the gap would be anything but brief, we evaluated our remote learning obstacles, addressed the technological challenges we'd encountered, and did what Seeds does best — **We found a better way.**

The Virtual Classroom debuted Fall 2020. Unlike pre-recorded lessons, the VC more closely mimics the one-to-one tutoring that students experience in the physical classroom. Students and tutors click one link on our website to enter a Virtual Waiting Room using Zoom. Once there, Site Coordinators match student needs with tutor abilities and send pairs into private breakout rooms where they work together as they would if they were physically at Seeds.

Just like the green hardcopies, digital folders keep a detailed record of a student's test scores, upcoming assessment dates, and progress on lessons. Tutors add to the comments to paint an even better picture of a student's progress. Any program staff member can review these folders at any time and provide work that is suitable for the student's individual learning plan.

**This innovative program launch happened as even more organizations were closing their doors.**

Adult Literacy programs just couldn't survive three, four... fifteen months into the pandemic. Adult learners had no where else to go. As a result, **our new Virtual Classroom attracted students and tutors from all over the United States, and even a few overseas.**

The success of the Virtual Classroom has been so popular that we made it a permanent part of our program. When our physical classrooms reopen, the VC will stay online as a third convenient site.

Although this past Fiscal Year was *completely remote*, it didn't stop a RECORD-SETTING number of adults from completing their GEDs virtually. Graduation 2021, the second virtual ceremony, recognized 94 graduates, including more than 20 dubbed the "Class of COVID." Those students found Seeds online, enrolled remotely, were tutored using Zoom, and graduated virtually. **Their Seeds experience was entirely online!**

Just like our students, Seeds is resilient. The pandemic is still very much a part of our daily lives, but we've changed how we operate. And I'm so proud of how our Seeds Family came together. The ingenuity of the staff, paired with the patience of the tutors, and our students' willingness to try a different way has made this program a success. But make no mistake — none of this could have happened without YOUR SUPPORT. **It truly takes a village and ours continues to grow. Thank you.**

*Bonnie Entler*

Bonnie Entler  
President & CEO

*George Miller*

George Miller  
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For the first time, our Annual Report contains advertising. Not only was tutoring conducted online, all of our fund-and-friend-raising events were virtual, too. We're thanking our sponsors here.

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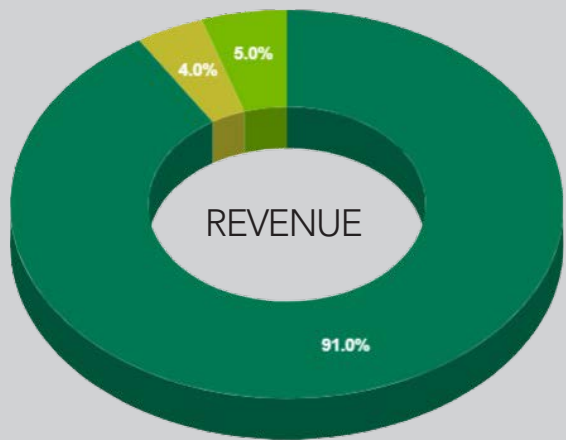
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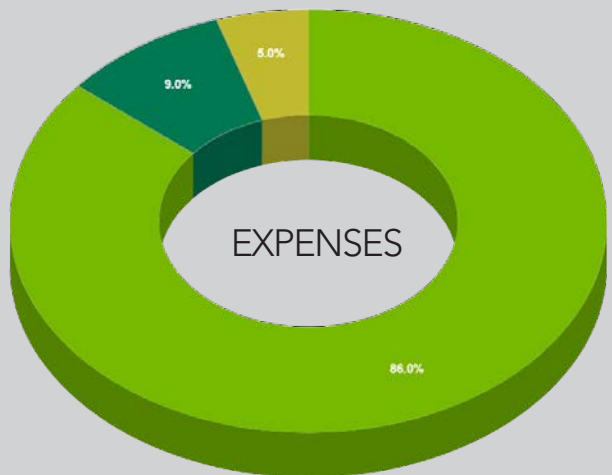
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Educational Program  
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Fundraising

For a detailed financial report, contact [donations@seedsofliteracy](mailto:donations@seedsofliteracy)

SEEDS OF LITERACY'S GUARANTEED ANNUAL FUNDING

\$0

Every year we raise the money to keep our doors open.



## EXPANDED REACH

The Virtual Classroom appealed to adults all over the country who couldn't find similar programs in their area. By the end of the Fiscal Year, Seeds was in more than 26 states.

## 1ST OUT OF STATE GRAD

Mighican-native Schanel thought her years of skilled labor were more than enough to make up for her lack of diploma. And they were... Until she tried to apply for the senior level of her position, one that would add an additional \$15 an hour to her pay. She interviewed well, and was even offered a position pending background and education check. Not having a diploma finally caught up with her. While hunting online for tutors, she found Seeds. She completed her GED January 2, becoming the first student to enroll, attend, and graduate while out of state. She beat her own deadline by several weeks!



## FISCAL YEAR

7/1/2020 - 6/30/2021

\* = 3 years of consecutive giving

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To provide personalized education that empowers adults to THRIVE in communities.

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## IN THE NEWS

The Cleveland media recognized that K-12 schools weren't the only ones impacted by the pandemic and regularly spoke with Seeds during the fiscal year.



October 8, 2020 - Student Eddie Clark and his tutor Ed Round spoke with Channel 5's Jade Jarvis about the challenges of remote learning. It was the first time they were inside Seeds in more than 6 months.



February 16, 2021 - Jade Jarvis visited Seeds West to talk with tutors Bill Cook and Lenny Horowitz about the shortage of tutors in the Virtual Classroom.



March 2, 2021 - Channel 3's Brandon Simmons took a look at the impact the Digital Divide has on learners in GED programs.



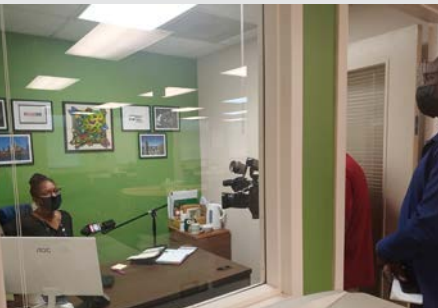
March 23, 2021 - A few weeks later, graduate-now-tutor Margo Hudson was interviewed by Channel 3 about how the Stay at Home order impacted Ohioans.



March 23, 2021 - 19 Action News Reporter Steven Hernandez interviewed graduate Maria Rodriguez and volunteer Maryann Nicola as part of a prime-time special "Cleveland Comeback: Facts About the Vax."



March 24, 2021 - Fox 8 Reporter Kevin Freeman interviewed VP of Programming Carmine Stewart about the impact of low literacy during the COVID pandemic.



[www.seedsofliteracy.org/news](http://www.seedsofliteracy.org/news)





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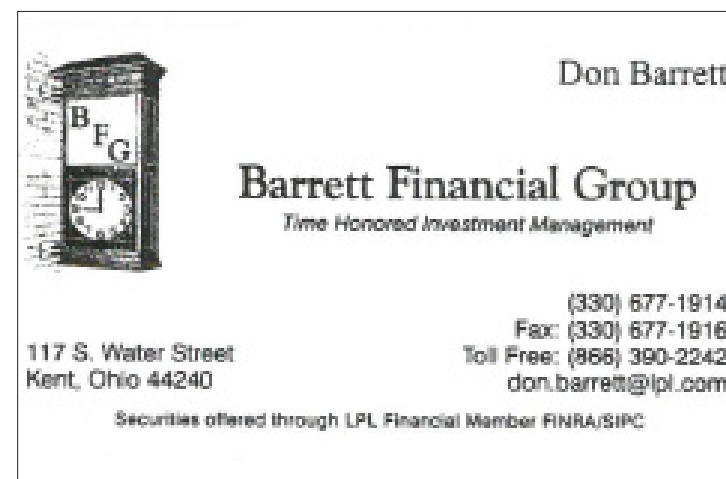
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We work hard to present  
a correct list of our donors.  
If there is an error,  
please accept our sincere  
apologies and contact us to  
correct our records. Thank you.

**"VERY Inspiring"**

**"★★★★"**

**"Great message & well-produced!"**

**"Everyone NEEDS  
to see this to really understand."**

**"I'm so glad this was shared!"**

**"The inspirational moments I needed today!♥"**

**"Heartwarming  
testimonials!"**

**"FANTASTIC program!"**

**"What a difference Seeds  
is making in so many lives!"**

**"WOW."**

**"Very, Very Well-Done!"**

**"INCREDIBLE stories!"**

## SIGNATURE EVENT ONLINE

When Seeds retired the Sowing Seeds of Hope brunch as a fundraiser, the *Thrive!* luncheon took its place as the new signature event. But by the third year, things had to look very different.

The pandemic prevented gathering in person for a luncheon. Online plans were made.

Like all other organizations, Seeds quickly learned that audience attention for Zoom events is limited. The event was shortened to just 30 minutes, but was PACKED with heartwarming stories and testimonials from students and graduates. Interviews were conducted in the weeks leading up to the event and interwoven together to form a compelling narrative that kept audiences engaged.

Despite the change, sponsors stepped up and the event was the most successful to date (...until Spring...)



## Sponsored In Part By

Carnegie Management and  
Development Corporation

Blue Point Capital Partners

FirstEnergy Foundation

The Huntington National Bank

Bill & Joyce Litzler



[www.seedsofliteracy.org/thrive2020](http://www.seedsofliteracy.org/thrive2020)

Also featured but not pictured, student Eriselda





# TRIVIA TIME

May 11, 2021

VIRTUAL Game Night



SEEDSOFLITERACY.org/GameNight

## TRIVIA TRUMPS THRIVE SUCCESS

In the spring, Seeds held it's first Trivia Time Game Night. The event exceeded expectations, raising even more than Thrive! had just a few months before.

New grad (and mother of 5) Desire Barb shared her incredible story. Tutors Brian Burtch and Maya Maholtra discussed their experiences as volunteers. Interwoven throughout the segment were important facts about Seeds and literacy rates in Cleveland.

More than 30 participants competed for cash prizes during 3 rounds of Kahoot trivia, answering questions about what they saw in the interview clips.

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*Desire credits her success to staff member Todd Seabrook (L) and Chris Richards (R). The pair never gave up on her, even when she wanted to give up on herself. Hear more of her story:*



[www.seedsofliteracy.org/gamenight](http://www.seedsofliteracy.org/gamenight)



People are at  
the heart of  
what we do.

PROUD EVENT SPONSORS

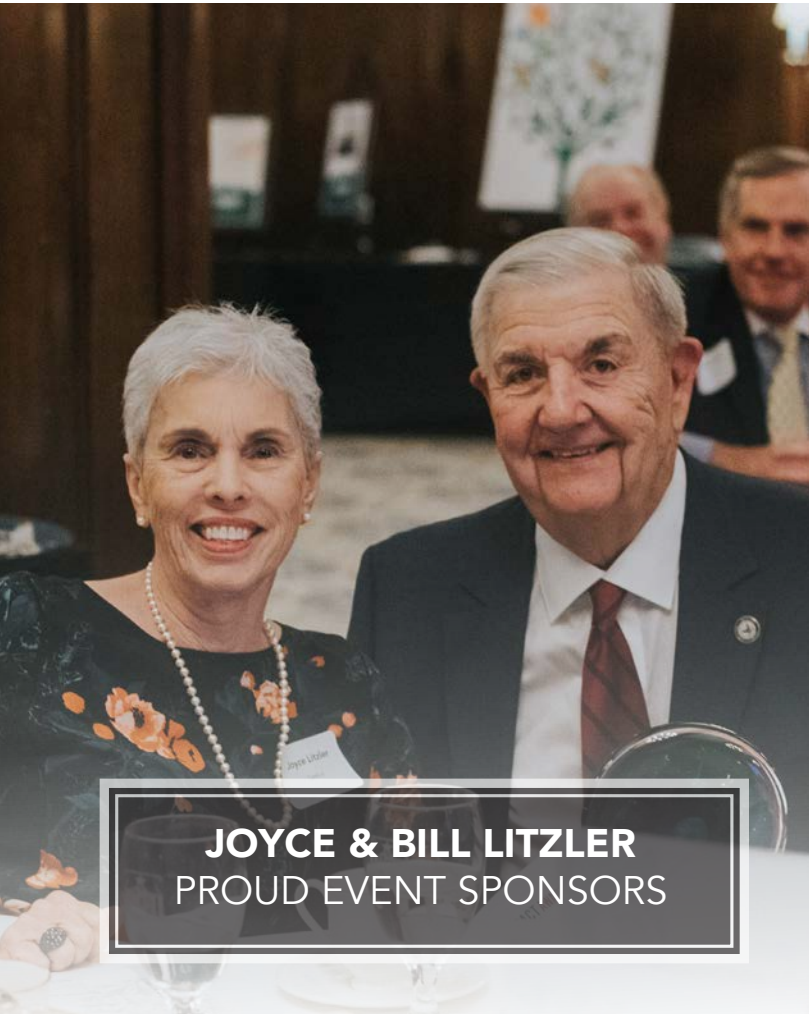
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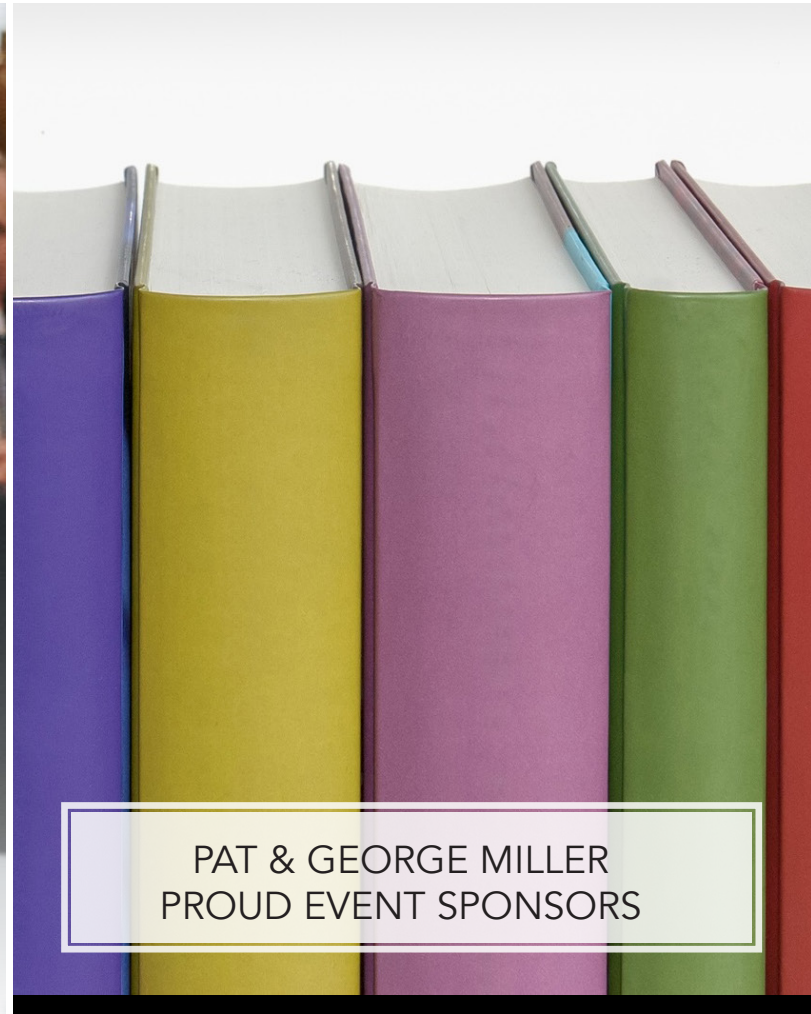
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## RECORD-SETTING GRAD CLASS!

On June 23, Seeds of Literacy did something the staff hopes to never have to do again: celebrate the graduating class virtually. But what they wouldn't mind repeating is the number of graduates — 94 adults in the last 12 months! In fact, it's one of the largest graduating classes since 2014.

But even more remarkable than the number of students is the circumstance in which they did it: They finished their high school equivalencies despite our physical classrooms being closed *and they did it during a pandemic*. Even more incredible, nearly two dozen of our graduates NEVER stepped foot on Seeds of Literacy's property. They enrolled, studied, AND GRADUATED entirely online. We call them the "Class of COVID."

Media personalities Harry Boomer (19Action News) and Jade Jarvis (News5) gave the keynotes.



**WATCH** individual speeches by local graduate TACHONNA, virtual graduate JEFFREY, and media personalities HARRY BOOMER and JADE JARVIS. [SEEDSOFLITERACY.ORG/GRADUATION2021](https://seedsoliteracy.org/graduation2021)



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3104 W. 25th St., 3rd Floor  
Cleveland, OH 44109

**SEEDS EAST**

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**VIRTUAL CLASSROOM**

[WWW.SEEDSOFLITERACY.ORG](http://WWW.SEEDSOFLITERACY.ORG)

