

ADULT EDUCATION THAT DARES TO BE

Different
♥



What Makes SEEDS OF LITERACY from other programs?

Different

OTHER PROGRAMS



Expensive



Semester Enrollment



Traditional Class



Their Speed



Strict, Set Schedule



Time's Up!

Seeds



100% FREE FOR STUDENTS

We provide the materials, official practice tests, and tutors at **NO COST**.



WEEKLY IN-PERSON ENROLLMENT

No waiting until next month/quarter/semester. Students can come to Seeds for orientation, **ANY WEEK**, *without* an appointment.

2-DAY ORIENTATION *Must attend both days.* CHOOSE **12:00** OR **4:00**

MONDAYS/TUESDAYS (Seeds West) or

WEDNESDAYS/THURSDAYS (Seeds East)



"CLASS" TIME IS REALLY TUTORING TIME

There's no teacher at the front of the room teaching everyone the same thing at the same time. Students work one-to-one with a tutor.

TUTORING TIMES MONDAY - THURSDAY

9AM - 11AM • 1PM - 3PM • 6PM - 8PM



LEARN AT INDIVIDUAL SPEED

Students won't fall behind. At Seeds, each works at his or her own **SKILL LEVEL**, at his or her own **PACE**.



SEEDS DOES NOT HAVE A STRICT ATTENDANCE SCHEDULE

because life gets in the way of even the most dedicated students. Students can come as **OFTEN** as they like, at **WHATEVER TIME** works best for them — even if it's not the same time each day.



THERE IS NO SET TIME FRAME TO GRADUATE.

The Seeds program is **ONGOING**. Most students need at least a few months of tutoring but it's not uncommon for students to be with us a year or more.



Dear friends

June 1, 2020 • Daring to Remain Different in 2018-2019

The writing of this letter comes nearly a year after we've wrapped up our 2018-2019 fiscal year (that's the nature of an annual report operating on an academic calendar.) Times are very different now than they were then. I write this from my home office, as our classrooms are closed due to COVID-19. It's almost enough to make me forget the challenges of 2018-2019. Almost. Truthfully, the uncertainty that I feel now is a painful reminder of the uncertainty I felt then.

In the summer of 2018, just as we were positioned to achieve another record-setting year, we received the devastating news that the State was discontinuing its support of Seeds. Representing more than 14% of our operating budget, the decision was predicated by our award-winning model not fitting the traditional program mold. **We dared to be different, because the needs of our students were different.**

Shocked, but undeterred, we formed an Advocacy Task Force, led by Bob Frost and assisted by tutor Margo Hudson. They launched a campaign inviting all of our elected officials to visit Seeds, talk to our students, and see first hand what makes us special. In May, Seeds testified at the Senate Finance Committee on Higher Education.

I am deeply grateful for their advocacy work, and for the support shown to us by donors who provided emergency gap funding to keep us operational that year. And there are simply no words to properly express my gratitude to the legislators that fought on our behalf: Senators Sandra Williams, Matt Dolan, Nicki Antonio, John Eklund; Representatives Michael Skindell, Bride Rose Sweeney, Stephanie Howes, Terrance Upchurch, and staffers from the offices of Governor DeWine, Congressman Wenstrup, Congressman Joyce, and Congresswoman Kaptur.

Their tireless efforts resulted in the return of Seeds to the State budget for the next two fiscal years beginning 2019-2020, and, incredibly, at the same amount we'd received in the past.

I hereby dedicate this annual report, and all of our successes in fiscal year 2018-2019, to each and every one of our donors. Through their contributions, advocacy, and support, Seeds not only survived, but thrived.

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how we did it



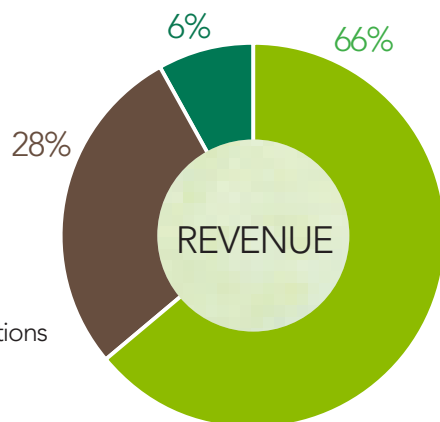
A Packed House

The first training of 2019 was remarkable for more than just the large turnout (50+ attendees) -- It was also the pilot of a completely revamped training featuring new materials, a new slide deck, and more hands-on instruction examples to better prepare tutors for their first day.

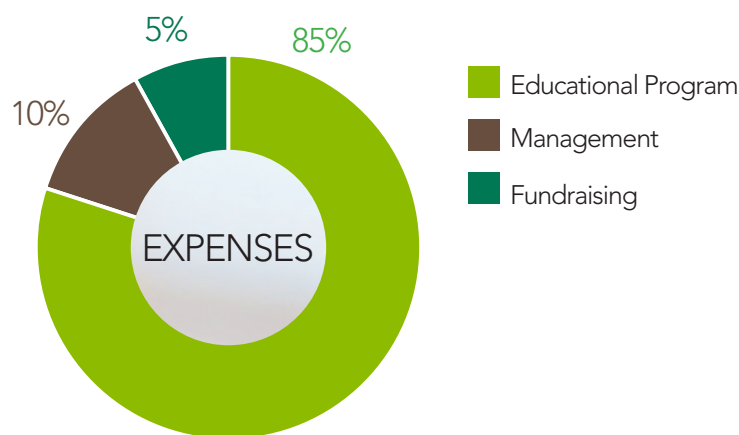


Challenge Accepted

The United Way of Greater Cleveland challenged Seeds to serve more people in the Latino Community by offering individual instruction in Spanish. In association with Esperanza, the resulting pilot program was designed to offer one-to-one tutoring by bilingual tutors to Spanish-speaking adults preparing for the GED. In addition to recruiting bilingual tutors, advertising to Spanish-speaking adults seeking a GED, and partnering with Esperanza, Seeds spent the better part of the year developing the program and acquiring curriculum written in Spanish. The one-year pilot program was launched in May 2019 for the 2019-2020 school year.



- Grants, Gifts, & Contributions
- Donated Services
- Special Events



- Educational Program
- Management
- Fundraising

For a detailed financial report, contact Bonnie Entler, Executive Director, at 216.661.7950 or bonnieentler@seedsofliteracy.org

SEEDS OF LITERACY'S GUARANTEED ANNUAL FUNDING

\$0

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

Our Mission

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

FISCAL YEAR

7/1/2018 - 6/30/2019

* = 3 years of consecutive giving

^ = Volunteer

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**the nation's
 FIRST EVER**



After being selected as a Top 10 Finalist by a panel of ProLiteracy Judges, KARA KRAWIEC, a site coordinator at Seeds of Literacy's East location, advanced through three rounds of public voting, becoming the FIRST EVER ProLiteracy Hero!

ProLiteracy, the largest adult literacy and basic education nonprofit organization in the nation, launched this contest to raise awareness about illiteracy in the U.S... "I'm so glad this award brings Seeds of Literacy into the international spotlight and we are able to let the world see Seeds, and our students, shine," Kara said.

The only INDIVIDUAL to advance in the competition, she is joined by runner-up Vision Literacy in California, and finalist Tarrant Literacy Coalition in Texas.

"I'm so deeply honored to be the first ever recipient of this award! My heart is so full!" she continued. "I cannot express how much this award means to me and I'm so grateful for all the people who voted endlessly in order to ensure we won! I could not do any of this without the incredible support of my family, colleagues, volunteer tutors, and most importantly, my awe-inspiring students whose perseverance and drive never cease to amaze me."

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Beginning Reader Program

Seeds expanded its programming with the launch of the Beginning & Struggling Reader Program. The Reader Program benefits students in two ways:

- **Potential students** with lower reading levels will no longer be turned away
- **Current students** will receive targeted instruction on reading comprehension, foundational to all high school equivalency (HSE) testing

Prior to September 2018, Seeds was like most adult education programs: unable to accept students who scored below a 3rd/4th grade reading level after taking the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Most materials for adult education and HSE preparation are written at a higher grade level, making the information inaccessible to lower-level readers.

"This minimum threshold is common practice in adult education. But Seeds prides itself on being different," says Dr. Stewart. "We hated telling adults that we couldn't help them, especially after they had the courage to come in and take the TABE. Now we don't have to. Everyone is welcome."

Text Message Success

In the fall, Seeds participated in a research project with Syracuse University and ProLiteracy. As part of the project, a fraction of the students received automated weekly motivational texts to see if texts impacted attendance. Because of the flexibility of our program, the effectiveness was difficult to measure. However, the larger draw was the ability to contact students individually. The response was overwhelmingly positive. Although absent students often ignored calls, emails, and postcards, they RESPONDED to texts. And, they reached out to us on their own, via text, to let us know if they wouldn't be in due to work or a sick child. Seeds didn't need to see the results of the study to feel the value. An account was purchased so the team could communicate with ALL of the students, not just the ones who participated in the study.



Seeds East Takes a Prize

Seeds East received 2nd place in the Ohio Nonprofit Excellence Awards for the success of evening classes during the first year they were offered.

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Curbside Appeal

Seeds finally has ground-floor signage at the corner of West 25th and Clark Avenue! Paid for in part by a small grant from the City of Cleveland's Storefront Revitalization Project, the signage dramatically increases visibility to pedestrians and drivers who travel the very busy intersection. Green bands were placed below the acrylic signs, outlining our services for Free Tutoring, Adult Education, and High School Equivalency Prep.

New Test of Adult Basic Education

A new Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) required the complete overhaul of orientation for new students, and provided new challenges for staff trying to analyze scores. The release of TABE 11-12 came with a reduction in useful TABE analytics, while also tripling testing time for students. Because of this, reassessments could only be given in one subject instead of all three, and orientation was mostly dedicated to taking the complete test over two days. Also, rather than listing specific skills, TABE 11-12 only gave general skill groupings which are not useful in accurately placing a student into the Seeds curriculum path. Staff had to switch to a reliance on scale scores rather than skill breakdown, and for the math particularly, a new, separate assessment (Form 1-4) had to be given to the student on the first day of class in order to obtain an accurate skill level.

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Fly Me To The Moon

On May 23, 2019, more than 160 guests attended *Sinatra! for Sonata*, a fundraiser for Seeds. Performer Michael Sinatra, a sought-after Sinatra impersonator, transported the audience back in time. But the true star of the show was student **Abigail Figueroa** who graduated just a few weeks later.

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Signature Event!

Following nearly two decades of successful *Sowing Seeds of Hope* brunches, Seeds launched a new signature event in the fall. *Thrive!* highlights student achievement and recognizes one outstanding Seeds Stakeholder with the Cultivator Impact Award.

The inaugural recipient was **William Litzler** — a longtime tutor, generous donor, charismatic event host, trusted advisor, and advocate for the Seeds program! Pictured above, student **Valerie Taylor** faced her public speaking fears by finding her voice in the ballroom. She was joined by classmate **Aneka Monday**, alumna **Charneil Daye**, and tutor **Margo Fauthhaber**.



L to R students Aneka Monday and Kimberly Brabson; Bill Litzler; alumna Charneil Daye; students Valerie Taylor and Rose Griffin

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Media Darlings

In addition to newsletters, media articles, and radio spots, Seeds proved to be camera ready! During National Literacy Month, Bonnie Entler appeared with recent graduate **David Miller** on WKYC's *Live on Lakeside*. That same month, new grad **Tyrell Chandler** told audiences of the *PlayaT Hollywood In Da Hood Show* about his personal journey: from gang member in prison to graduation. In October, WKYC's *Ana Garcia* filmed her show from Seeds West. For Health Literacy Month, 2012 graduate **Maria Rodriguez** appeared on a special segment with TV20's Leah Haslam.





grads learn to own their stories

This year saw the 2nd largest graduating class since the GED changed in 2014, with 51 graduates. Excited for their futures, grads were drawn to speaker Captain **Courtney Schoch**, who share her personal story: drop-out to commercial airline captain, non-profit founder, marathon runner, and upcoming author. **Reggie Latten**, a 2019 GED Student Award recipient, shared his story of setbacks and achievements. "I was hungry for success, I'm still not full," confessed graduate **Imani Morree**. **Fatima Kaba** closed the speeches with her own tale of immigration, homelessness, and education.



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