

PROJECT LITERACY



presented the



B. R. Ashby, M.D. Award for
Outstanding Community Service

2024



We believe that every person, no matter their age, income, or background, should be able to read and comprehend the materials that they are required to complete in everyday life. From employment applications to medical instructions, to directional signs, to housing contracts, to school assignments – everyone needs to be able to effectively communicate their needs through reading and writing. We are changing lives, one tutoring session at a time. ”

– Project Literacy

ABOUT PROJECT LITERACY

Project Literacy believes that literacy is the foundation of education, opportunity, and social and civic participation. For over 40 years, the program has offered one-on-one tutoring for adults 18 and older with tutors who are trained volunteers. The goal is for graduates to read at a 4th grade reading level or beyond with increased self-confidence, helping them to advocate for themselves in life situations that require reading labels, instructions, and forms.

Tutoring is also available in math, to help students perform basic mathematical operations in daily life or to pursue a GED, and in English as a second language, to help non-English speakers gain fluency in both speaking and writing.

Individuals seeking to be tutored are never turned away or charged for the services and materials provided. If Project Literacy cannot assist with the need directly, they employ a wide network of partners that are able to step in and take over.

The current literacy rate among adults in Danville is approximately 18%, which means that almost one in five adults is reading below a 4th grade level. This is slightly lower than the national low-literacy rate of 21%; however, it creates a problem for the area as it impacts the poverty rate of the city. Danville is the seventh poorest city in Virginia with a poverty rate of 22.4 percent.

**DID
YOU
KNOW?**

Project Literacy has been active in the community for over 40 years! And they have never charged for their services.

PROJECT LITERACY BY THE NUMBERS (2023)

 **31**
volunteers

 **4,512**
estimated
volunteer
hours

 **32**
tutoring
clients

 **600**
books
provided to
the community

 **155**
books
provided
to clients

 **20-85**
years old
(age range
of clients)

PROJECT LITERACY CORE PROGRAMS

One-on-One Confidential Tutoring

Project Literacy offers free confidential tutoring to individual adult clients who wish to become better in reading, writing, math, technology, English speaking, and writing. In the past two years, they have assisted clients to ready themselves for a GED program and to achieve proficiency in writing for college entrance examinations. This tutoring aims to help learners be proficient, confident, and enthusiastic about learning.

Tutors and their students meet for one hour at least once a week if not more as needed. There is no cost for the tutoring session or materials.

Book Buds Book Club

The club is designed for those who can read but would like to better understand what is being read through comprehension. At each book club meeting, a vital comprehension skill is taught and practiced. Through a partnership with the Danville Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Project Literacy has been able to offer Book Buds Book Clubs at the Southside Community Learning Center at Cardinal Village and at Cedar Terrace.

HOW WILL **\$60,000** PROJECT LITERACY USE THE \$60,000 ASHBY AWARD?

Support is currently dependent on donations from individuals and civic organizations and their annual fundraiser, the JeopardBee. Project Literacy will use the Ashby Award funds to support the general operating expenses of the program to increase staff hours and pay which will help them expand their services further into Pittsylvania County, Virginia and Caswell County, North Carolina. They also plan to increase promotion of their services through advertising, social media, and the creation of additional promotional materials.

Other funds will be used to purchase books, learning materials, and computer applications that better assist in targeting their clients' individual needs and interests.



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Collaborative partnerships are necessary for Project Literacy to provide their services in the community. These partners have provided valuable assistance in a variety of ways that include referrals, space for tutoring, tutors, office space, publicity, and promotion.

ARC of Southside
Averett University
Danville Church & Community Tutorial Program
Danville Public Schools
Danville Redevelopment and Housing Authority
God's Storehouse
Goodwill Industries
Gunn Memorial Public Library
House of Hope
Life Support LLC
Office of Community Development, City of Danville
Ruby B. Archie Public Library
Salvation Army
West Main Baptist Church

"I got married to my wife in 2022 and came to Danville, from South Korea. At that time, I needed to improve my English skills as a new immigrant. Many people may think that your wife is a native English speaker, so you can practice your English at home.

But ridiculously, it was impossible. My wife and I made an agreement that my family must use Korean at home. Because of this decision, I had no opportunity to speak English. So she tried to help me and found Project Literacy. And that is why I started an English lesson with Todd early this year.

I think that it is good to introduce what we do every week. Usually, I get two regular homework assignments. One is writing about a specific subject, and the other is a workbook. Todd reads my homework, corrects what I did wrong, and explains why.

Through those assignments, I can practice English writing, grammar, and vocabulary. He also gives me regular assignments, such as reading a specific book, a list of expressions related to Southern American English, or a book about homophones.

Through those materials, sometimes I can study what even my wife does not know. After reviewing my homework, we do some activities. These activities may include word games, a list of new expressions, reading a book or an article aloud, and discussing interesting topics. Todd prepares those activities every week, considering my interests and weak points in English.

By joining this Project Literacy program, I'm pretty sure that I have improved my English skills a lot better than before."

FROM A CLIENT

ABOUT THE B. R. ASHBY, M.D. AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE

The DRF Board of Directors established the B. R. Ashby, M. D. Award for Outstanding Community Service in recognition and appreciation of the exemplary service and selfless leadership of B.R. Ashby, M.D., a founding Board Member and first Chair. The \$60,000 general operating grant award - which began in 2009 - honors outstanding community service in the Dan River Region by nonprofit organizations, based on their success in helping needy families and individuals overcome significant challenges.

Each year, the general public is invited to nominate regional nonprofits that demonstrate commitment to caring and generosity of spirit. The nominator cannot be a paid staff member at the organization under review. Board members, volunteers, and community members are eligible to make nominations.

Nominated organizations that meet the award criteria will be invited to submit a full application. Eligibility requirements include:

- The nominated organization must be at least five years old.
- The nominated organization must be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a 501 (c)(3) organization. This can include churches and religious organizations as defined by IRS Publication 1828.
- The organization must be located in the DRF service area (Danville and Pittsylvania County, VA and Caswell County, NC) and a majority of its clients and/or programs must be located in the service area.
- Grantees currently funded or having a commitment to receive funding by DRF at \$200,000 + annually are not eligible.
- Previous Ashby Award recipients are not eligible to receive the award again until after five years.

The award selection process is overseen by an Advisory Committee of four community members and a DRF Board representative.

PAST B. R. ASHBY, M.D. AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE WINNERS

- County Outreach Ministry, Inc. – 2023
- Caswell Parish, Inc. – 2022
- Grace & Main Fellowship/
Third Chance Ministries – 2021
- Just Kids Child Development Center, Inc. – 2020
- Danville Speech & Hearing Center – 2019
- Pittsylvania County Community Action – 2018
- Caswell Family Medical Center – 2017
- Danville Cancer Association – 2016
- God's Storehouse – 2015
- Northern Pittsylvania County Food Center – 2014
- Danville Life Saving Crew – 2013
- God's Pit Crew – 2012
- Danville Church-Based Tutorial Program – 2011
- Caswell Parish, Inc. – 2010

About DRF

The Danville Regional Foundation (DRF) focuses on transforming the regional economy and creating a prosperous culture to benefit all Dan River Region citizens. It does so by making long-term investments to improve education, economic vitality, community wellness, financial stability and civic capacity for citizens throughout the City of Danville, Virginia; Pittsylvania County, Virginia; and Caswell County, North Carolina.

The Danville Regional Foundation (DRF) envisions thriving Dan River Region communities where all residents are encouraged and equipped to build healthy and productive lives for themselves and their families.

DRF's mission is to be a catalyst for long-term transformation through the development, promotion and support of impactful activities and programs that address the health, education, and well-being of all the Dan River Region's residents. The Foundation is one part of a large collaborative network of partners from all sectors working together as agents for innovation promising a sustained positive impact on the entire region.

Since its establishment in 2005,
DRF has committed more than
\$180 million through more than
580 grants.



For more information on DRF, our programs, our partners and other grant making opportunities, please visit our website at www.drfoonline.org.