



The Literacy Alliance

Literacy News

A quarterly publication of the Literacy Alliance

2010 Issue I

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Literacy News is mailed to 4,000 homes and businesses and distributed through branches of the Allen County Public Library. Back issues can be read on The Literacy Alliance's web site, www.fwliteracyalliance.org.

FWF Employee Studies at TLA

Thirty eight year old Eddie Callen shook his head. "It's not like it used to be," he said. "Used to be able to get a job without a diploma." The diploma is "what companies ask for now. If you don't [have one], they don't want to have you."

When the economy slowed and shrank, The Literacy Alliance saw more and more people in Eddie's situation. They held good paying jobs without high school diplomas or GED's. While they were making a living and building their lives, the environment changed. No matter what the job, employers stopped looking at applicants if they did not have a diploma.

For thirteen years, Eddie worked at Fort Wayne Foundry. He ran robots that shook GM parts, intake manifolds and water pumps, out of their molds. The robots then trimmed the parts. Eddie said that about a year ago the company called everyone to a meeting and told them to "stop what we're doing and go home. They said we'd continue for six months, fill orders and then that's it." Eddie's last day was February 19.

Originally from Alabama, Eddie took special education classes and couldn't read or write when they gave him a certificate of completion. "I used to stutter. It's hard to learn when you stutter," he said. "Teachers know when students are having problems. It's not the student's fault." Eddie does not stutter anymore. He speaks slowly, giving thought to each sentence.



Former Fort Wayne Foundry employee Eddie Callen works on Nimble Fingers in the Euell A. Wilson Center computer lab. The Euell A. Wilson Center is The Literacy Alliance's newest internet lab designed to help student improve their basic skills. Students access learning resources such as Nimble Fingers at the volunteer facilitated site.

Two years after high school, Eddie realized he was getting nowhere at work. "If you can't read and write, you can't elevate." He contacted a local literacy organization in Alabama which first placed him in a GED class of 100 people with two teachers. Soon he was matched one-on-one with a tutor. Meanwhile, the stress and pressure of his work grew intolerable. He quit and caught a Greyhound to his brother's in Fort Wayne. "Got here September 1, and by November 10 I got the Fort Wayne Foundry job."

During the years Eddie lived in Fort Wayne and worked at the foundry, he devoted many hours to improving his reading and writing skills. He explained that it was something he needed to do for himself. "If you don't want it for yourself, no one's going to give it to you." Through The Literacy Alliance, he studied with a one-on-one tutor, attended St. Hyacinth learning center, and used the agency's computer lab.

Eddie's need for a GED has increased since Fort Wayne Foundry closed. Enrolled at WorkOne, he will be eligible for Trade Act Assistance once he gets the diploma. In addition to the chance for TAA, WorkOne provides work-

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FWF Employee Studies, continued on page 2

shops and computer resources that help with job and academic skills.

He currently attends basic literacy classes Tuesday mornings at the Fort Wayne Urban League and Thursday mornings at the Euell A. Wilson Center. Both sites provide internet computers and tutor assistance. Students work on basic reading, writing, math, keyboarding, and computer skills.

Small Group Tutoring Sites

Euell A. Wilson Center
1512 Oxford Street

Fort Wayne Urban League
2135 S. Hanna Street

ACPL - Main Library
900 Library Plaza

Announcements

Adults interested in strengthening their basic skills or preparing for the GED® Tests must register for a preliminary orientation session. Call The Literacy Alliance, 426-7323.

Congratulations to Zora Alexander. The 2009 GED® graduate received Ivy Tech's College Bound Free Class Scholarship. Zora who attended The Literacy Alliance WorkOne learning center qualified for the scholarship and submitted an application. She was one of five who received a free class at Ivy Tech Fort Wayne.

Don Hall's Restaurants has ended its Community Partnership Plan due to the economy, declining usage, and rising administrative costs. The Literacy Alliance is grateful to Hall's and all who participated in the program, bringing monthly donations to the agency over the past four and a half years.

The Literacy Alliance welcomes new board member Becky Cooper of Lincoln Financial Group and literacy tutors Deb Adkison, Shawanda Dent, and Keith Diller.

Volunteer opportunities are available at The Literacy Alliance. Tutor adults in reading, writing, math, and basic English. Help answer phones and track volunteer hours. Collect books and shelves for Habitat home libraries. To volunteer, register online at www.fwliteracyalliance.org or call Laura at 426-7323.

Wish List

The Literacy Alliance is in need of the following for learning centers:

- Pencils
- Pencil top erasers
- One subject spiral notebooks
- Letter size, one tab, file folders
- Electric pencil sharpener
- 1" three ring binders
- Notebook dividers
- Flash drives
- Gas cards in small dollar amounts
- Casio fx260 calculators for GED® practice test
- Bus passes
- Reading glasses

If you are able to donate any of these items, please contact Brian, 426-7323.



Teacher Anne VonGuten talks about the importance of goal setting at the WorkOne Learning Center in March. She developed and presented the eight hour work readiness module as part of The Literacy Alliance's efforts to incorporate work readiness into instruction.

Students specifically learned about completing applications, writing resumes and cover letters, interviewing, and goal setting. Online resources and group activities allowed them to practice these skills. The module covered additional work related skills such as decision making, problem solving, and the various communication skills including written, oral, and behavioral (body language).

Hundreds Enjoy GED® Graduation Event

The 2009 GED® graduates gathered with friends and family at the March 3 graduation event. Hosted by FWCS Department of Adult and Continuing Education and The Literacy Alliance, the event celebrated the graduates' success at the Scottish Rite Center. All passed the GED® Tests in 2009 after dedication and hard work.



There were two parts to the event. From 5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m., two hundred attended the reception in the Scottish Rite Ballroom. They shared stories and took pictures. They enjoyed snacks and learned about educational and employment opportunities from representatives of local colleges and WorkOne. Graduate Matthew Tumbleson (left) described the events that led him to Anchor Learning Center. Literacy Alliance Board President Karen Francisco presented the agency's 2010 GED® Scholarship to Roxanne Jastrzemski (right).



At 6:45 p.m., all went upstairs to the Scottish Rite Ballroom, joining hundreds who had arrived for the main event, the commencement ceremony. Applauding the fifty five graduates were nearly a thousand, including the mayor, city and county council members, and FWCS board members. Five graduates told the audience about the obstacles they overcame to pass the GED® Tests.

Thanks to Individuals & Organizations for Their Support...

Individuals

C. Philip Andorfer
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...and to the Komets & Comcast for Report Card Night

The blowing snow of February 5 did not keep "A" students and Komet fans from the game against the Port Huron IceHawks. It was Report Card Night, and the 10,480 in attendance watched the Komets trounce the IceHawks, nine to one. They also saw Literacy Alliance Executive Director Judy Stabelli accept a \$5,000 Comcast donation.

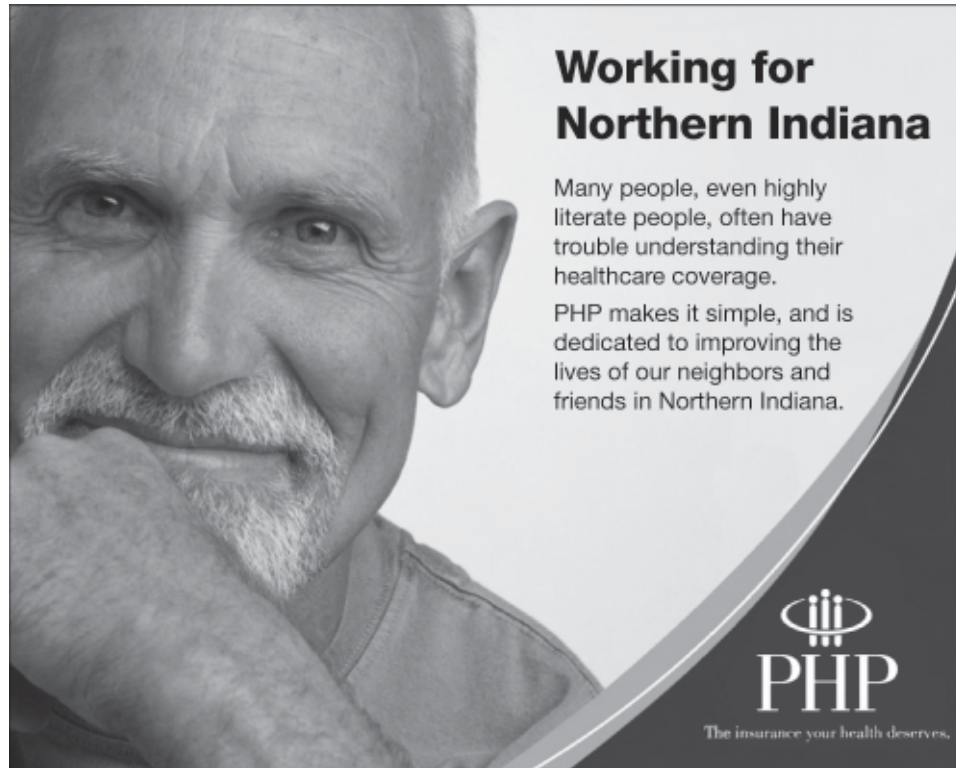
Sponsored by the Komets and Comcast, the annual Report Card Night event provided a great incentive for area students to earn good grades. Students with an "A" on their report card received a complimentary ticket to the game.

To help promote the event, The Literacy Alliance got word out to area schools. The agency obtained permissions from the schools to distribute fliers supplied by the Komets. In early January, 60,000 fliers were delivered to 131 schools.




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GED® Graduation Event Sponsors



From the Director's Desk

In this issue, you have read about some of our recent successes and challenges. GED® graduates celebrated with their friends and family again at the annual reception and graduation event. We saw a record eighty eight GED® graduates in 2009.

Teacher Anne VonGunten developed and presented work readiness lessons to students at her site, the WorkOne Learning Center. Her work has resulted from our efforts to incorporate work readiness components into instruction.

Eddie Callen exemplifies the student we are seeing more often, a displaced worker who despite years making a living without a GED® cannot get employment. For many, despite efforts to improve reading and writing skills, it may take a long time to reach that goal.

While serving adult learners, we are making progress on a new strategic plan. After board development efforts designed to increase board involvement and effectiveness, the next logical step was to develop a new strategic plan. To that end, weekly meetings of the strategic directions committee resulted in recommendations for board action at its May retreat.

As revenues became uncertain this year, individual donations helped us keep service levels steady. We have not cut services. Although we are rapidly depleting our small reserves, we'll see five learning centers, three tutoring sites, and two family literacy sites through to the end of this program year.

As always, we welcome your input. Please feel free to contact me at any time.



Judith Stabelli, Executive Director



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