

Literacy Council of Buncombe County Annual Report 2002

Letter from the Chairperson of the Board of Directors

Dear Friends of the Literacy Council of Buncombe County:

For over a decade, the Literacy Council of Buncombe County has worked diligently to help area adults attain the reading and language skills necessary to achieve a better quality of life. As part of this year's annual report, the Board of Directors and staff are reaffirming their commitment to meeting the organization's mission of increasing the literacy skills of our community.

The Literacy Council of Buncombe County is a vibrant resource center for all individuals in Asheville and Buncombe County who desire to develop their talents. As an organization, we support each student's goals and applaud their successes. We value the volunteer's commitment and the partnership that develops between the student and tutor. We are dedicated to life-long learning.

The Literacy Council appreciates the Asheville-Buncombe County community's continued support of the organization through financial contribution and volunteer efforts. As we look to the future, we thank everyone for their ongoing encouragement, support and participation. Working together, we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Nancy Crosby and Marvin M. Cole
Co-Chairpersons
Literacy Council of Buncombe County

Our Mission:

The mission of the Literacy Council of Buncombe County is to improve the basic education and English language skills of area adults by providing them with one-on-one and small group tutoring by trained volunteers.

Our Organization:

The Literacy Council of Buncombe County is located at 86 Victoria Road, Building B, in Asheville, North Carolina. The Council started in 1992 as a result of a merger between the Altrusa Literacy Council and the Asheville-Buncombe County Literacy Council. The organization received its 501(c)(3) tax exempt status in September of 1993. The budget for last fiscal year totaled \$113,062 with four part-time staff including an executive director, an adult basic education coordinator, an English as a second language coordinator and an assistant ESL coordinator/office manager. A fifteen member Board of Directors governs the Council.

Numbers served and student achievements:

In the last year, the Literacy Council of Buncombe County served **321 students**, trained and supported **241 tutors who volunteered 11,878 tutoring hours**. Some of the student achievements are as follows:

- 85% of the students' reading improved by one or more instructional levels
- 28 students entered employment
- 38 retained their employment with increased reading skills.
- 20 students received their driver's license.
- 19 obtained library cards
- 39 reported increased involvement in their children's educational activities
- 16 reported increased involvement in community activity

Financials

Community Investment		Benefits to the people served	
Donations	\$ 48,037	Wages and taxes	\$ 73,959
Religious groups	\$ 3,931	Supplies and services	\$ 12,443
Service clubs	\$ 4,499	Program development	\$ 16,247
Grants and foundations	\$ 48,510	Other	\$ 10,413
Memberships	\$ 2,000	TOTAL	\$113,062
Special events	\$ 15,500	Program cost per student is \$352	
Endowment income	\$ 1,860		
TOTAL	\$124,337*		
*additional funds transferred to reserves			

Student Profile

Participants by educational level	2002
ABE beginning	35
ABE intermediate	8
ASE (adult secondary level)	8
ABE/ASE TOTAL	51
ESL beginning	120
ESL intermediate	115
ESL advanced	35
ESL TOTAL	270

Students' ethnic background	2002
Asian	13
African-American	18
Hispanic	130
White	160
Native American	0

Number of students served	2001	2002
ABE/ASE	42	51 (21% increase)
ESL	231	270 (17% increase)
Total	273	321 (18% increase)

Volunteer tutors and hours	2001	2002
Volunteer tutors	176	241 (37% increase)
ABE/GED volunteer hours	1,734	1,945 (12% increase)
ESL	7,481	9,933 (32.5% increase)
Total	9,215	11,878 (29% increase)

Looking forward:

The success of one-on-one tutoring and small group instruction provided by well-trained volunteers has been and will continue to be the key to the Council's successful literacy program. Last year the program's student retention rate was 87% while 85% of the students improved their basic skills. Based on these successes, the Literacy Council will continue to work to increase public awareness of the organization and its mission, as well as increase the organization's capacity to serve more students than are currently being served.

Due to preparation work during 2002, the Literacy Council has received three new grants totaling over \$35,000 for the purpose of developing content based programming in the areas of citizenship, health education, money management, workplace skills and home buying. This new programming will provide adult basic education and English as a second language students and their volunteers with practical, everyday informational lessons and materials.