



Who are we?

Founded more than 40 years ago and entirely funded by donations, Washtenaw Literacy is a 501c3 nonprofit agency serving adults in Washtenaw County. Filling a critical gap in our county's population, our literacy programs serve adults who need to improve their reading, writing, numeracy or communication in English.

What is our mission?

Washtenaw Literacy's core mission in the community is to provide adult developmental literacy skills training, focusing on three critical areas: basic literacy skills, educational attainment training, and jobs and workforce literacy.

What we do

Washtenaw Literacy's programs are designed and serve adults who need to improve their reading, writing, numeracy or communication in English. Focused on helping adults find and keep jobs through improving literacy skills, our three essential programs are:

1. **Skills First** – basic skill building in reading, writing, math, English communication and basic digital literacy. Tutoring is customized to the learners' goals.
2. **Education Now** – support for educational attainment, such as earning a GED, completing high school credits and earning a diploma, or accessing secondary training programs.
3. **Workforce Ready** – developing literacy-based workforce competencies such as skill building contextualized to job tasks, job seeking or employment soft skills.

How we do it

All of Washtenaw Literacy's services to learners are free. Programs are delivered through a network of highly trained and supervised volunteer tutors. The Washtenaw Literacy volunteer force is 750 strong. Our volunteers can choose to be 'Personal Tutors' working either one to one or in small clusters with two or three learners, or they may choose to tutor in a group setting. Some Personal Tutors continue to work with a learner for years; others fulfill the six month commitment that is expected. Group tutors can choose drop-in tutoring or commit to time-limited weekly sessions.

Who is served?

In the 2012-2013 program year:

- ✓ 73% of our learners were unemployed or under-employed
- ✓ 61% of our learners were parents
- ✓ 68% of our learners were women
- ✓ 88% of our learners live below the federal poverty guidelines

Part of the success of Washtenaw Literacy programs is attributed to meeting the learner in the community, in spaces throughout Washtenaw County:

- ✓ 72% of 1:1 pairs meet in public libraries
- ✓ 15% of 1:1 pairs in coffee houses/McDonalds
- ✓ 6% at Washtenaw Community College

Why we need your help

As a root cause of unemployment, underemployment, and poverty, low skills contribute to homelessness, food insecurity, poor health outcomes, poor civic involvement, and weak parenting skills. Illiteracy is a hidden cost of living we all bear.

When adults improve their literacy skills, they become more productive employees, more engaged parents, and more responsible health care consumers. It is a tool that leads to lowered dependence on supportive social services. The opportunity to teach adults who are ready to learn is one we can't afford to miss.

Together we can break the cycle of illiteracy in Washtenaw County and build a stronger community.