



Learning Lab

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating 25 Years of Empowering Lives!

A spark, an idea, a connection, a shared vision.

More than 25 years ago, Carolyn Beaver wrote a project proposal for the Junior League of Boise. This idea was to help people who struggled with basic reading skills, not only for the individual, but for the workforce of the future. The League worked to make this vision a reality, and we thank them for their foresight, leadership, and dedication.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead

At Learning Lab, we do change the world, one person at a time.

The change literacy makes in one person is exponentially powerful, in the lives touched, in the strength of a workforce, and in the health of our community.

Today that shared vision has evolved into a dynamic independent organization.

Since 1991, over 3,500 students have experienced life-changing educational opportunities through Learning Lab.

**Thank you for believing in literacy for all
For giving your time to support our work
For caring about education for adults and their young children
For contributing and asking for accountability.**



Each student's story is a moving tribute to your contributions.

Thank you for caring for those who just needed the opportunity to learn, to be supported and encouraged.



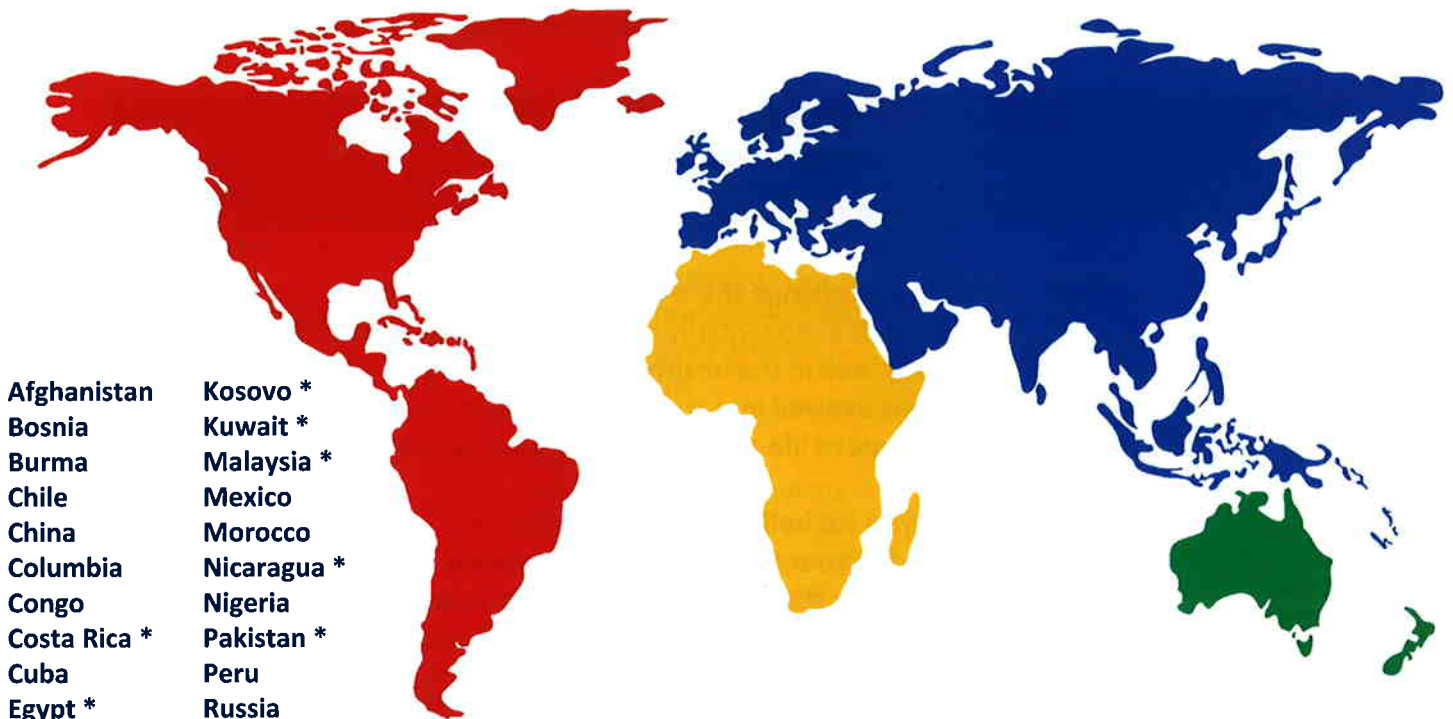
It's my pleasure to share our Annual Report, summarizing our student demographics, progress indicators, as well as a few stories of the lives literacy has changed. For so many, the intergenerational cycle of illiteracy and poverty has been broken - a permanent, positive change. Parents have overcome their struggles and now envision their children's future in college.

Children no longer have to start school behind their classmates. They are ready to read and know learning can be fun. Adults who moved from one low skill job to another now have steady jobs and know the happiness of promotions, and jobs with benefits. Some are now homeowners. The American Dream is alive and well for our students because of your support.

Whether your involvement was years ago or is active today, thank you for making it possible for us to celebrate this year. Your involvement made a difference that will not be forgotten.

Ann Heilman
Executive Director

Our Students



- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Afghanistan | Kosovo * |
| Bosnia | Kuwait * |
| Burma | Malaysia * |
| Chile | Mexico |
| China | Morocco |
| Columbia | Nicaragua * |
| Congo | Nigeria |
| Costa Rica * | Pakistan * |
| Cuba | Peru |
| Egypt * | Russia |
| El Salvador * | Rwanda * |
| England | Somolia |
| Eritrea | South Korea |
| Ethiopia | Spain |
| Honduras | Sudan |
| India | Thailand |
| Iran | Ukraine |
| Iraq | USA |
| Italy | Uzbekistan |
| Japan | Venezuela |
| Kazakhstan * | Vietnam |
| Kenya | * new this year |

Our students represent **43 countries** of origin and range in age from under 1 to 79 years old. This year, we welcomed new students from Costa Rica, Egypt, El Salvador, India, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, and Rwanda.

After 5 years in the U.S., eligible refugees and immigrants may apply for citizenship, which involves a lengthy application process, rigorous civics studies and English language practice. 5 Learning Lab students, originally from Somalia, Uzbekistan and Mexico were proud to achieve U.S. citizenship this year.

A Record Number Served

Total Students
379

Class Hours Attended
27,891

- 289 Adults
- 211 Female
- 78 Male
- 13 Basic Skills, Reading/Writing and Pre-GED Studies
- 37 GED Prep
- 239 English Language Learners

- 61 Families
- 90 Children
- 40 Female
- 50 Male
- 50 Preschoolers, age 3-5
- 31 Infants/Toddlers
- 10 Preschoolers "graduated" ready for Kindergarten



- 51% Not working at time of enrollment
- 89% Very low income
- 7% Low income
- 3% Medium income
- 1% High income (paying full tuition)

"Learning Lab classes have helped me be more confident speaking English. This helped me a lot at my job."

Students' Accomplishments

289 Adults Enrolled

- 19 passed 40 GED subject area tests
- 6 earned GED certificates
- 5 Students achieved U.S. citizenship
- 58% Improved reading levels
- 80% Expanded English language and communications
- 62% Enhanced writing skills

"I never thought I'd get my GED. It was a lot of work, but I did it! I'll go to BSU this fall. That makes me so proud and happy."



Preschoolers' Progress

Early Childhood Education is part of our Family Literacy Program. Parental involvement is emphasized, and 90 children participated in high quality activities developed and delivered by professional educators. Progress indicators are reported for children who were present for assessments at school year end.

Preschoolers & Infant/Toddlers

93% Increased language & emergent literacy abilities

85% Developed cognitively

76% Increased social skills

83% Increased emotional & self-regulatory behaviors

83% Increased fine/gross motor skills



Preschoolers

100% Increased language & literacy

92% Improved numeric literacy

77% Developed cognitively

73% Increased social skills

85% Increased emotional/self-regulatory behaviors

85% Increased fine/gross motor skills



"My child learned that there are kids from all over the world and they can be different and they can be their friends."
- A Family Literacy Mom

Parents' Perspective

Family Literacy includes: adult literacy class, early childhood education classes for infants, toddlers and preschoolers, Parent And Child Together (PACT) activities, and Parent Time which includes education-oriented parenting classes. Our goal is to encourage positive parental involvement and help parents realize they are their children's first and best teachers.

Our parents said:

"Learning Lab provided so many books that we read every day. The teachers always gave us ideas of what to do at home. That helped us stay motivated to work at home."

"My son learned so much in preschool. He is more social and can follow rules and instructions, can wait for his turn and is respectful with other kids."

"My son's teachers helped open his mind to imagination, to create and learn and to try new things."

"My teachers teach me so then I can teach my children."



Our Students' Stories



Sakina "Safe" and "happy" are words Sakina uses to describe herself now. These are not words she would have chosen 2 ½ years ago while living in a refugee camp in Mozambique. Forced to flee the violence in her native Congo, Sakina and her sons lived in this camp for 10 years. The rest of her family lives there still. When Sakina learned she and her young boys were going to be resettled in Boise, she felt excitement with a tinge of fear – excited to have peace and opportunity for herself and her kids, but anxious about this entirely new culture. Her friends at International Rescue Committee helped her

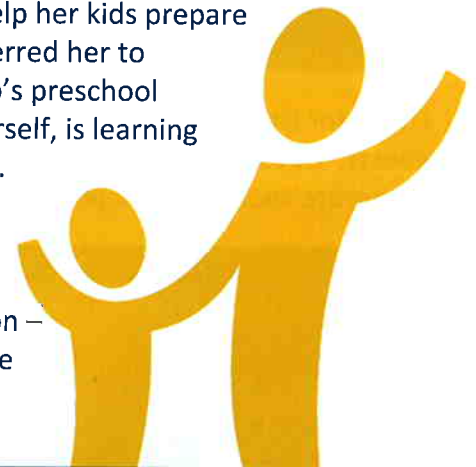
navigate housing and find a job. Her new teachers and tutors at Learning Lab are helping her with her English skills so that she can eventually become a Certified Nurse's Aide. She is grateful for the one-on-one instruction, kindness and encouragement she receives here.

Enrique By the time Enrique was a teenager, he understood how restricted his future might be. Cuba's total governmental control, extremely limited freedoms, and lack of opportunities did not mesh well with his curious nature and insatiable appetite for learning about the world. He taught himself rudimentary English using a 1950's, brown-paged text his uncle had given him, somehow knowing one day, he'd need to know this language. Ten years ago, his mother and sister left Cuba and 2 years ago, Enrique was finally granted reunification. They all now reside in Boise. He has completely embraced his new home and values the safe and friendly culture of Boise and the freedom and opportunities of the United States. Though he has a job now, he looks forward to having a challenging career, possibly in the culinary arts. He attends Learning Lab to increase his language skills so he can "ask more questions, communicate with everybody, grow professionally and have a better life." Enrique appreciates his tutors' patience as he practices his English and they, in turn, appreciate his humor, positive outlook and zest for learning.



Rosalba & Lithia When Rosalba, a young mother from Mexico, and her 2 children, Aksel and Lithia, joined our family literacy classes 3 years ago, she spoke no English. She shyly giggled, smiled, and shook her head "no" whenever someone spoke to her in English. She'd been in the United States for less than a year and very quickly realized that in order to make friends, get a job, and most importantly help her kids prepare for school, she needed to learn the language of her new country. Her friend referred her to Learning Lab. Fast forward to the present...Aksel "graduated" from Learning Lab's preschool and is now thriving in his second grade "Super Star" class. Lithia, a rising star herself, is learning all the skills she'll need for a great start in kindergarten next year. And Rosalba... she still has her shy giggle, but with the help of great teachers and tutors, she now comprehends and converses in English with a mastery that was

unimaginable just a few years ago. And she has a job! Further cause for celebration – she recently became a U. S. citizen! We are so proud of Rosalba and her family. They are all Super Stars!



"My daughter knows basic numbers, letters, shapes and colors. She also learned to have a school routine. I think she's ready for school."

Governance & Guidance

FY16 Board of Directors:

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Kathy Winterton

Our Volunteers

Since that first Junior League project in 1991, volunteers have been the heart and soul of Learning Lab. Our volunteer Board and Advisory Board members provide governance and thoughtful direction to guide us forward efficiently and effectively. Volunteer tutors provide individual attention and encouragement to students, an essential part of our teaching methods. Our 9 part-time professional educators create personalized lesson plans for every student, which are implemented by the volunteers.

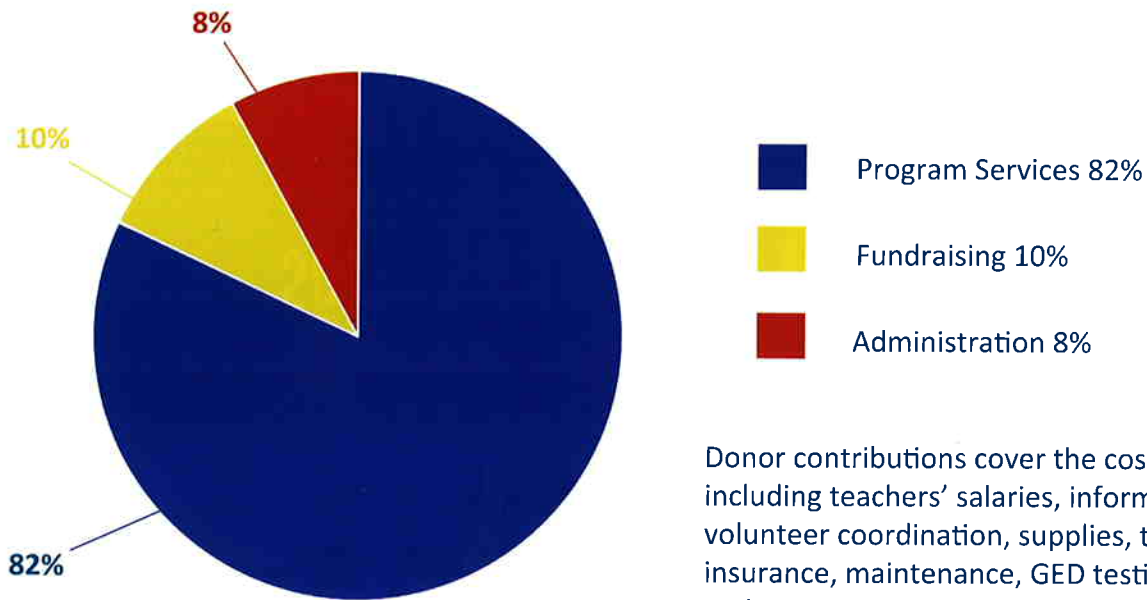
Our IT Advisory Team, Finance Committee, and Lunch for Literacy planning team are all volunteers helping Learning Lab succeed. Many other volunteers assist with administrative tasks, facility maintenance projects and much more. In FY16, our steadfast volunteers donated over 9000 hours to Learning Lab.

Lunch for Literacy

Lunch for Literacy raises approximately 12% of the annual operating budget. This year was a SELL OUT with 920 guests. Guest author, Ridley Pearson delighted the audience of literacy supporters including community leaders, corporate sponsors, and philanthropists. Student speaker, Tonya Sherwood, shared her story of overcoming obstacles on her path to obtaining her GED. She inspired our guests and reminded everyone of the importance of supporting Learning Lab and advocating for literacy for all.

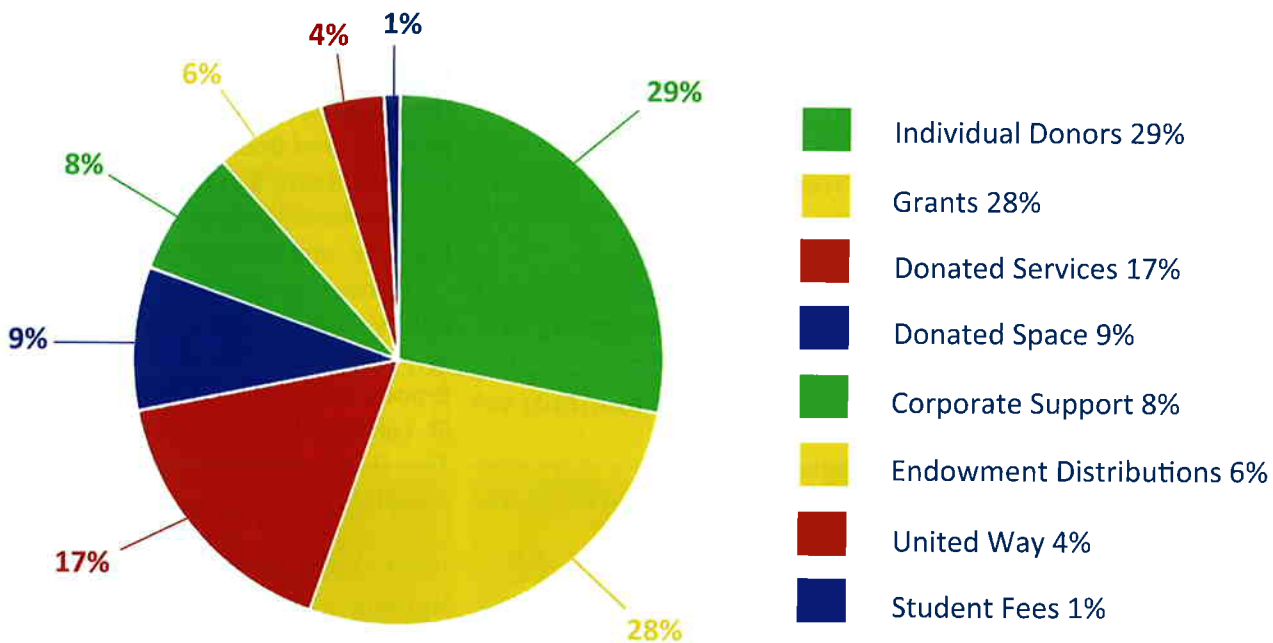


Your Donations Funded



Donor contributions cover the cost of classes including teachers' salaries, information technology, volunteer coordination, supplies, training, utilities, insurance, maintenance, GED testing, transportation and more.

FY16 Sources of Income



Our Mission

To teach and encourage adults who struggle with literacy, help families discover the joy of learning so all children start kindergarten ready to read, create hope for brighter futures and build a stronger, more self-sufficient, and engaged community for all.



Learning Lab

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Garden City, ID 83714

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Literacy for All

Our Partners Help Us Build a Stronger Community

Our low-income students have the opportunity to improve their education because our community cares. Classes are funded by individuals, families, philanthropists, foundations, corporations and civic organizations. This group weaves a tapestry of hope, faith in better futures, and the American Dream. Our FY16 sponsors, foundation and business partners include:

J.A. & Kathryn Albertson Foundation
Albertsons LLC
Jill Aldape
Anonymous Family Foundation
Bank of the Cascades
Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health
Bodybuilding.com
Boise Endodontics
Boise State Public Radio
Boise State University,
College Of Education
Suzi Boyle, Mortgage Loan Originator
CBH Homes
C.M and Edna P. Cotton
Family Foundation
Converge One
Delta Dental of Idaho
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erstad Architects
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Idaho Central Credit Union
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Idaho Independent Bank
Idaho Power
The Idaho Statesman
Idaho Writers Guild
The Integra Northwest Foundation Inc.
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St. Luke's Boise Regional Medical Center
Title One
Troxell Fund, Inc.
U.S. Bank
United Heritage Insurance
United Way of Treasure Valley
Wells Fargo
The Whitney Foundation

* Through Idaho Community Foundation