

# Reading Matters

Spring 2014



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## Did you know?

### Last year...

- ◆ Project READ linked 1,030 adults with free GED, reading, ESOL and family literacy classes.
- ◆ Project READ gave away more than 20,000 books to children and families in need.
- ◆ Project READ volunteers tutored 151 adults and 469 children.

The Newsletter for Project READ, the Dayton area's literacy coalition.

## Refugee escapes oppression, seeks GED and a new start



*Z.J. (not pictured above) is one of many refugees seeking a new life in the United States.*

Imagine attending a high school where other students routinely spit at you and push you around. That's what happened to Z.J.

"The Russian people don't like us," says Z.J., an Ahiska Turk who prefers not to use her full name.

In Russia, Ahiska Turks are an oppressed minority. The constant

bullying and abuse finally caused Z.J. to drop out of school and move to America.

The change has been dramatic. Once met with scowls and abuse, now Z.J. encounters smiling faces and helpful people.

"I am so happy here. I feel safe," Z.J. says.

Z.J. is now studying to earn her GED at the Miami Valley Career Technology Center's GED class at Sinclair. While studying for the GED test is difficult for any student, Z.J. has to learn English as she reviews the content for the GED. It is not an easy task, but Z.J. is up to the challenge.

"I want to get my GED and prove to my family: I did it!" says Z.J.

## DP&L Concert for Literacy plays U2 favorites on June 19

Join us Thursday, June 19, at 8:00 for the DP&L Concert for Literacy at the Frazee Pavilion featuring "One: A Celebration of U2."

Purchase your tickets — just \$10 each! — at the Frazee box office.

Children (10 and under) are \$5 on the day of the show only. All proceeds benefit Project READ!

Thank you to our event

sponsors: DP&L, First Financial Bank, Sinclair, Montgomery County, Porter Wright and Heidelberg Distributing.



## “It’s amazing how much better this class makes me feel about myself”

Nicole dropped out of school at 16, but not for a “typical” reason.

“My father was an alcoholic,” Nicole says. “He kept us up most of the nights. I couldn’t pay attention in school. He did that pretty much my whole childhood.”

Nearly two decades later, Nicole is back in school as a GED student.

“It’s amazing how much better this class makes me feel about myself,” Nicole says.

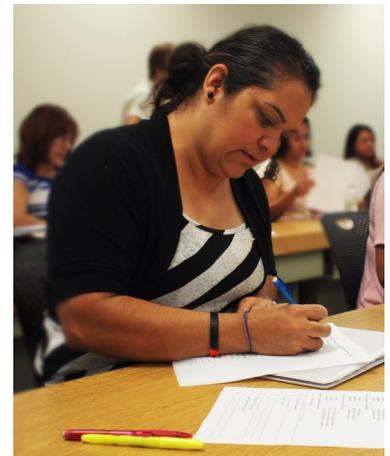
Nicole “loves” her teacher but admits she is tough. Students are expected to be on time every day and cannot miss too many days or they are dismissed from class.

“Some of us need tough love,” Nicole

says.

Despite juggling the responsibilities of raising four kids and struggling with chronic migraines, Nicole won’t give up.

“You can accomplish what you want in life,” Nicole says. “For some of us it just takes longer.”



*A GED student determined to succeed.*



*If Tycelia could go back in time, she would look like this!*

## 57 year old finally has time to pursue her own goals

If Tycelia could take a time machine to go back to any point in her life, she would go back to high school and get her diploma.

“I’m tired of taking jobs no one else wants,”

Tycelia, 57, says. “I want a career, not just a job.”

Tycelia was always a working mom. Now that her youngest is 17, she can finally focus on her own goals. She’s

studied for the GED for the past year and a half and now also has a Project READ tutor helping her each week.

“One day I’m going to get there,” Tycelia says. “I’m not going to quit.”

## Support Project READ with your Kroger Plus Card

Link your Kroger Plus Card to Project READ for a painless way to support literacy!

Kroger Community Rewards allows you to select a local non-profit to receive 1% of the value of your everyday purchases. Visit [www.kroger.com/communityrewards](http://www.kroger.com/communityrewards) and enter **83116** to direct your donations to Project READ.

**Were you linked to Project READ through your Kroger Plus Card last year?** Every Kroger Plus card holder must renew their Community Rewards selection each year. Please visit the website listed above to renew your support of Project READ in 2014-2015. Thank you!

Link your Kroger Plus Card to Project READ for a painless way to support literacy!

## Area teachers receive 12,000 free books from Look At A Book giveaway events



*This teacher was very happy to take home free books from Look At A Book!*

Chip Houghton, President of local book retailer Look At A Book, knows how to make a teacher's day: give them free books!

Working through Project READ, Chip invited hundreds of area teachers to visit his retail store in September. Armed with tote bags, teachers could fill their bag with free books to be given to their students or for use in their classrooms. Chip estimates that he gave away 7,350 books to 68 teachers during that first event.

"Teachers came in with the biggest bags I've ever seen and filled them to the brim," Chip said. "I don't even know how some of them carried their bags to their cars! But they were so appreciative for the books to share with their students."

After so much success in September, Chip decided to have another giveaway in January. During this event, 50 teachers took home another 5,000 books. Some teachers took the task of finding the perfect books very seriously: a few climbed into the 4 foot by 4 foot boxes to find the books hidden on the bottom!

Chip is a board member for Project READ and makes supporting literacy part of the mission of his business. In the last five years, Look At A Book has donated more than 100,000 books to adults and children in the Miami Valley through Project READ. As part of a National Volunteer Week promotion, Project READ also invited its volunteers to select one free book at the Look At A Book retail store in Antiques Village in Centerville.

You can support Project READ by supporting Look At A Book! Stop by their retail location at 651 Lyons Road in Centerville, to browse the thousands of new and like new books they have in stock. All books are just 3 for \$10.

Thank you, Chip, for your support of Project READ!



*Sometimes you really have to search to find the perfect book!*

## Have some extra time this summer? Read with kids to prevent summer slide!



*Share your love of reading with kids this summer.*

Project READ needs a few good volunteers to share their love of reading with children this summer. Here are three opportunities open to volunteers:

- Project READ will place volunteers at House of Bread in Dayton on selected days each week to read with children from 10:30-11:30 am.
- Mad River Local Schools will have a "Reading and Lunch" program at several locations from June 9-August 1. Hours vary from 10:45-1:30.
- Trotwood-Madison Schools need volunteers for their summer program Mondays-Thursdays, 8:30-3:00, from June 16-July 18.

Can you help? Call Project READ at 937-461-7323 to sign up. A weekly commitment is preferred.

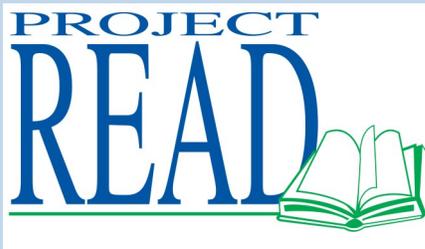


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**BUILDING LITERACY THROUGH COLLABORATION.**

## Words of wisdom from GED students:

“No matter where you are, there is always somewhere bigger and better to go.”

- Alex, 24

“Education is confidence. It is pride. Success is a journey, not a destination.”

- Michael, 40

“You have to have faith and confidence in yourself. You can’t have fear in your heart.”

- Rochelle, 35

“You have to go through the rough before you get to the easy.”

- Ke'Laron, 23

“You’re never too old to learn something.”

- Phillip, 40



*Project READ is a United Way  
partner agency.*

**Project READ is based at Sinclair Community College and shares the Sinclair Community College Foundation’s 501(c)(3) designation. All donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Project READ does not sell or share its mailing list with any third party.**