

FY2014 Annual Report

Overview

In the United States, an estimated 30 million people over the age of 16 read no better than the average elementary school child. Worldwide, nearly 800 million adults are illiterate in their native languages; two-thirds of them are women. Yet the ability to read and write is the basis for all other education; literacy is necessary for an individual to understand information that is out of context, whether written or verbal. Literacy is essential if we are to eradicate poverty at home and abroad, improve infant mortality rates, address gender inequality, and create sustainable development. Without literacy skills—the abilities to read, to write, to do math, to solve problems, and to access and use technology—today’s adults will struggle to take part in the world around them and fail to reach their full potential as parents, community members, and employees.

Project Read served over 85 students this past year to combat the cycle of illiteracy in Utah County. This report details its successes.

Volunteer Contribution

Without a doubt, volunteers are the lifeblood of Project Read. Project Read could not fulfill its mission without the help of the 144 dedicated volunteers this year who helped teach students and train tutors. Volunteers also helped with fundraising, public relations, web site and technical support, web site redesign, and general office tasks. Project Read board members are also volunteers.

Volunteer	Hours
Tutoring	2,417.30
Other Tutor-Related Activities	993.70
Other Activities	711.58
Total	4,122.58

Asset-based Approach

Project Read focuses on the strengths and skills the adults already possess and then uses those strengths and skills to encourage the development of literacy skills. Tutors are trained to apply reading and writing skills to everyday life so the adults see how what they are learning is applicable and feel successful in their quest for literacy skills. The adults in the program also realize that they are not completely without literacy skills, and they may just need to strengthen the skills they already possess.

Student Successes

In Fiscal Year 2014, Project Read served 86 students. Project Read focuses on retention until a student completes the program or accomplishes his or her goals. Goals and outcomes will continue to be the focus of Project Read services and will be measured through standardized literacy assessments, Individual Education Plans, and monthly tutoring calendars.



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During FY2014, 100 percent of the Project Read students who were retested using the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) increased their skills in either reading, language, or math (88 percent of those retested achieved a level gain—a 1.0 grade-level equivalent (GLE) increase in either reading, language, or math) . In addition, in FY2014, 76 percent of Project Read’s students achieved at least one literacy-related goal (see table below).

Goal	Number Achieving Goal
Students entering employment	8
Students retaining employment	56
Students receiving a raise	1
Students achieving level gains	30
Students obtaining a GED	1
Students passing the TOEFL	2
Students placed in postsecondary education/training	7
Students graduating from Project Read	5
Total	110*

*This is a duplicated count—some students achieved more than one goal.

Financial Highlights

In these difficult economic times, Project Read has struggled with the rest of the nonprofit world to find the revenue to equal the expenses required to continue programming. Sound financial management has allowed Project Read to accumulate a reserve of unrestricted net assets that Project Read has been able to draw upon in lean economic years. Although Project Read has dipped into this reserve this year, the staff is committed to increasing revenues and/or decreasing expenses in the future to reverse this trend and once again add to the Project Read financial reserve.

Fundraising

Project Read relies on grants, corporate sponsorships, and individual donations to continue offering its services for a minimal fee. Without continued community support, Project Read could not realize the successes it has each year. Give the fundamental gift of reading. Please contact Project Read Executive Director Shauna K. Brown at (801) 852-6654 or shauna@project-read.com to donate.



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Volunteer Hours Contributed

Volunteer Activity	Number of Volunteers	Hours Spent
Tutoring	90	3,257.75
Tutoring lab	22 (11)	153.25
Board meetings	13 (1)	91.75
Fundraising	30 (15)	93.33
Newsletter	1	72.00
Parties	1	3.00
Web site/technical support	4	200.00
Intern (Orientation, Social Media)	4	197.50
Training	1	1
Office tasks	8 (3)	53.00
Total	174 (30)	4,122.58

*() indicates number of volunteers in this category duplicated elsewhere in the count.

**Unduplicated count.

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Student Level Gains

Level Growth	Decrease	0-0.9	1-1.9	2-2.9	3+	Totals
Entry Level						
0-1.9	0	1	1	0	1	3
2-3.9	0	1	8	3	6	18
4-5.9	0	1	3	1	3	8
6-8.9	0	3	2	2	0	7
Totals	0	6	14	6	10	36

Goals Achieved

Goal	Number with Goal Set	Number Achieving Goal	Percent Achieving Goal
Students entering employment	11	8	73%
Students retaining employment	60	56	93%
Students receiving a raise	2	1	50%
Students achieving level gains	36	30	83% (of those retested)
Students obtaining a GED	8	1	13%
Students passing the TOEFL	6	2	33%
Students placed in postsecondary education/training	8	7	88%
Students becoming U.S. citizens	2	0	0%
Students graduating from Project Read	11	5	45%
Total	144	110*	76%

*This is a duplicated count—some students achieved more than one goal.

Project Read served a total of 86 students (compared to 68 students in FY2013) and utilized the services of 158 volunteers.

158 volunteers donated **4,136 hours** and helped Project Read serve **86 students** who learned skills that improved not only their own personal lives but also the lives of their spouses and children (**147 immediate family members impacted**).

Thank you for your support—we could not do it without you!



FY2014 Student Demographics

Employment Status

Employment Status	Number of Students	Percentage
Employed—Full	28	33%
Employed—Part	24	28%
Not in the Labor Force	26	30%
Unemployed	8	9%

Household

Household	Number of Students	Percentage
At-Home Independent	5	6%
Dependent	11	13%
Head: 2 Parent*	26	30%
Head: No Dependents	16	18%
Head: Single Parent	11	13%
Living Independently	16	19%
Group Quarters	1	1%

*Number of children impacted: 87

Income Level

Income Level (for 1 person)	Number of Students	Percentage
Very Low (30% < \$13,500)	46	53%
Low (50% \$13,501 – \$22,500)	20	23%
Moderate (80% \$22,501 – \$35,950)	13	15%
Above Poverty (\$35,951+)	7	8%

City

City	Number of Students	Percentage
Lehi/Saratoga Springs	2	2%
Midvale	1	1%
Pleasant Grove	1	1%
Orem	26	31%
Payson/Salem/Santaquin	7	8%
Provo	46	54%
Spanish Fork	1	1%
Springville	2	2%



PROJECT READ

CHANGING LIVES THROUGH LITERACY

Age/Ethnicity/Gender

Age Group	Ethnicity/Gender										TOTAL
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Asian or Pacific Islander		Black not of Hispanic Origin		Hispanic		White not of Hispanic Origin		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
16-18	1	0	0	1	0	0	3	2	0	1	8
19-24	0	1	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	0	7
25-44	0	0	3	3	1	0	6	22	6	4	45
45-59	0	0	0	1	0	1	4	10	4	2	22
60+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	4
TOTAL	1	1	4	5	2	1	15	36	14	7	86
	2		9		3		51		21		
	Males: 36 / Females: 50										



FY2014 Accomplishments

Changes Completed in FY2014

Marketing/Program Expansion: Use increased brand exposure and marketing to constituents/community to build awareness and partnerships and reach more people.

Utah County Illiteracy Survey: Project Read worked with three professors at BYU to conduct a demographic study to determine the number of adults with low literacy skills in Utah County who qualify for Project Read.

Diversified Funding: Project Read received donations from several local companies this year including Dollar General, United Way, Corporate Alliance, Premier Auto Brokers, eBay, Democratic Women of Utah County, and Provo Ladies of Elks. In addition, Project Read conducted several annual fundraisers including one with AmazonSmiles, Smith's Earn & Learn and Costco.

Quarterly Fundraisers: In line with its efforts to diversify fundraising sources, Project Read held quarterly fundraisers with local businesses in FY2014. In the first quarter, Project Read hosted its seventh annual spelling bee fundraiser to raise literacy awareness and funds for Project Read, in addition to a fundraiser with the Outlets at Traverse Mountain. In the second quarter, Project Read participated in the Barnes & Noble Gift Wrap fundraising program. In the third quarter, Project Read participated in the Love Give Utah 24-hour day of giving statewide, and in the fourth quarter, the Project Read Board approved a plan to hire a Development Director to focus specifically on the Project Read fundraising efforts.

Brand Redesign: Project Read worked with the BYU AdLab to create a new logo and branding for Project Read, encapsulating the idea that Project Read changes lives through literacy—a book opens doors. In conjunction with the brand redesign, Project Read is working on an updated website, fliers, marketing materials, etc.

Marketing: Project Read is increasing awareness by hosting booths at the Orem SummerFest, Provo Freedom Festival, and Utah County Fair. Project Read is also partnering with local organizations who serve its target clientele to offer community workshops and increase awareness of its literacy services.



FY2014 Accomplishments

Changes Completed in FY2014

Create Infrastructure/Limit Barriers: Create infrastructure to support efficient, effective programs and training and limit barriers to entry/instruction.

Orientation: Previously, Project Read offered tutor orientation 3 times/month (1st Tuesday morning, 2nd Wednesday afternoon, 3rd Thursday evening). Tutor orientation is now offered weekly (two in the afternoon and two in the evening each month—most tutors who attend the morning orientation, and there are few, are available to attend other times as well). In addition, Project Read staff is working with a volunteer to create a video of the student orientation.

Streamlined Intake Procedure & Paperwork: Project Read worked with a UVU service learning group to identify data to collect about the current intake procedures to reduce the time between when a student walks through the door to when they are considered an enrollee. In addition, Project Read staff created a “fillable” .pdf form to streamline student intake paperwork. In addition, Project Read received funding to purchase a new laptop for data entry.

Updated Technology Center: Project Read received funding to update the computers in the Project Read Technology Center. The donated computers in the lab are slow and are not capable of running some new software recently purchased. The new computers will mitigate the need to turn on computers 30 minutes before the lab opens to allow time for programs to load, in addition to having the capability to run new software.



FY2014 Accomplishments

Changes Completed in FY2014

Improve Instruction: Improve the quality individual instruction offered by volunteers to help adult learners in Utah County improve their literacy skills.

Transition Program: Project Read has a Master's student from Brigham Young University who created a curriculum to help Project Read students who are graduating from the program transition into other programs that will help them meet their goals—including getting a GED or high school diploma, or passing the TOEFL. These lesson plans are now available to Project Read tutors and students.

Community Workshops: Project Read is partnered with local organizations who serve its target clientele to offer community workshops and increase awareness of its literacy services. Project Read partnered with the South Franklin Community Center to offer a tax workshop and the Volunteer Care Clinic to offer a health workshop. Project Read also offered a financial literacy workshop in partnership with AmericanWest Bank and an employment workshop in partnership with BBSI/Strategic Staffing.

Tutoring Lab: Project Read opened a tutoring lab three days a week so students do not have to wait to start learning. Even in the week or two that it takes to find an individual tutor for a student, there can be a loss of motivation, and obviously a loss of time that could be spent learning. In the tutoring lab, students learn life skills (time management, basic computer skills, study organization, job skills—interviewing, resumes, etc.), health literacy, and financial literacy. Students who attend the lab are at the top of the tutor placement list. Project Read also received funding to purchase a tablet for students to use in the lab; there are some great, free, education apps available.

Literacy Specialist: Project Read hired a literacy specialist who is in charge of the tutoring lab three days a week as well as mentoring Project Read tutors to help them provide the best instruction possible, providing workshops for tutors and students on various topics, and creating lesson plans for tutors to use.

Writing Lab: Project Read started a Writing Lab every Saturday conducted by a licensed English teacher. Any community member who needs additional assistance with writing (in any capacity) can come to the lab and receive help.

Tutor Certification/Mentor Program: An AmeriCorps VISTA in collaboration with the literacy specialist created a tutor certification/mentor program, including online training modules and mentoring with the literacy specialist, that will be implemented in the upcoming fiscal year.