

“ *In a world driven by
information,*

LITERACY ”

*is the most essential
skill required.*

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

JULY 1, 2020 - JUNE 30, 2021



LOUDOUN LITERACY COUNCIL
CHANGING LIVES THROUGH LEARNING

A MESSAGE from our LEADERSHIP



2021 proved a challenging year for many of our clients. For others, it was a year of recovery. For Loudoun Literacy Council, it has been a year of unprecedented success. We have seen numerous accomplishments in terms of our programs. We provided literacy services to 2,469 individuals in Loudoun County, serving more adults in our community than ever before-- over double our numbers just two years ago. We have distributed nearly 15,000 books to those who need them most. We also trained 103 volunteers to contribute to support our clients as teachers, readers, and literacy instructors.

We have also garnered recognition for our outstanding work. The Catalogue for Philanthropy named us "One of the Best," recognizing Loudoun Literacy Council as a critical nonprofit in our region. We were also awarded the GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency for the fourth straight year.

We entertained and engaged our community with a virtual bedtime story reading from Loudoun Chamber President, Tony Howard. Our online "Voices and Volunteers" presentation celebrated our outstanding volunteers and shared the stories of those we serve. And we proudly returned to in-person events with Reading Between the Wines this spring and NOT Your Kid's Spelling Bee this fall.

This would not have been possible without the tremendous support of our community, partners, donors, staff, and especially, our volunteers who provided over 2,700 hours of service.

After adapting our programs last year to overcome the challenges of COVID, this year we focused our efforts on growing our services and our reach to meet the increased literacy needs of our community. Understanding that success in school depends on a strong parent-school relationship, we launched our School Success Program in 2019 with a pilot at Sterling Elementary to teach parents with limited English proficiency how to navigate the school system. This year over 105 parents participated in our School Success Program at 8 local schools and school clusters. Partnering with local businesses and organizations to provide customized work-focused English instruction at their work site, our Jobsite Literacy Programs reached 48 employees at local businesses.

While we are proud of what we have accomplished this fiscal year, we recognize that it also sets the stage for the future success of our organization. Literacy is the tool to advance agency, identity, and belonging. We are grateful for the individuals, organizations, and businesses that are committed to changing lives through literacy.

Nikki Daruwala, *Executive Director*
Brigitta Toruño, *Board Chair*

WHO WE ARE

Loudoun Literacy Council has been providing literacy services in Loudoun County, Virginia, since 1980. Our programs have evolved over time from English tutoring services for recently arrived refugees into extensive literacy enrichment opportunities for adults and children through our adult and family literacy programs.

Our Adult Literacy Program provides small group classes and individual tutoring for adults seeking assistance in basic literacy, English for Speakers of Other Languages, GED preparation, financial literacy, citizenship test preparation, and health literacy.

In 2019, we added School Success, a program aimed at educating non-English speaking parents to better communicate with their child's teacher and school administration.

In 2020, we launched Stepping Stones to Literacy, a program to provide bi-lingual literacy to pre-literate English language learners.

Since 1998, our Family Literacy Program has provided the federally mandated but unfunded literacy enrichment component to the Head Start program in Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS), which includes reading in the classrooms, book

distribution, and family literacy events for all members of the families served.

In 2017, this program was expanded to include children in LCPS's Starting Toward Excellence in Preschool (STEP) program. Our Sweet Dreams Program models reading aloud for families and provides literacy activities for families residing in the local homeless shelters. The Baby Book Bundles Program provides literacy tips and baby books to at-risk expectant and new parents. Our Book Builder Program distributes books in the community, and we incorporate a community partnership model to enhance and deliver our services.

OUR MISSION

Loudoun Literacy Council's mission is to teach English communication skills and provide literacy resources to low-income adults and children to empower them to become self-sufficient and confident in their ability to achieve their personal and professional goals.

OUR VISION

Our vision is that all those who live and work in Loudoun County will have the literacy skills required to participate and thrive in our community.

OUR CORE VALUES

RESPECT for our program participants, volunteers, and staff.

COLLABORATION among the board and staff as well as with our volunteers and partners in the community.

INCLUSIVENESS in our programs and events so that all feel welcome.

SERVICE to our community and its residents.

TRUST in the positive intent with which we all approach our work.

EMPOWERMENT of our program participants and the staff and volunteers who serve them.

TRANSPARENCY and ethical behavior in all interactions.

COMMITMENT to race and gender equity in our program development, staffing decisions, and board decisions.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION



timeline of MILESTONES

Literacy is vital to the strength and resilience of our community.

Loudoun Literacy Council was formed for the purpose of providing tutoring services to teach English to Loudoun County residents from non-English speaking countries.



1980

Sweet Dreams was added to the Family Literacy Program to provide a reading program for families residing in homeless shelters.



2005

Baby Book Bundles was added to the Family Literacy Program to distribute books and literacy tips to low-income families with new babies.



2008

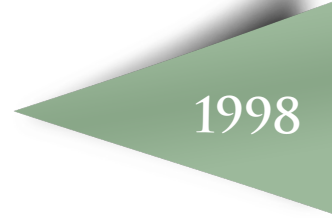
Loudoun Literacy Council began offering General Educational Development (GED) preparation classes to adults; after our first term, one student sat for and passed the GED test.



2013

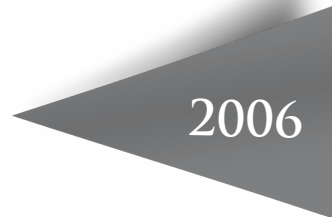
Jobsite Literacy Program was added to support employees in learning work-related vocabulary and improving their communication skills.

Family Literacy Program started as a partnership with Loudoun County Public Schools and Loudoun County Head Start.



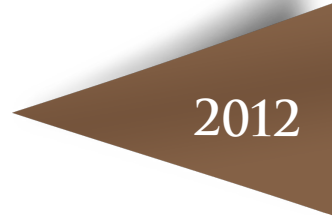
1998

Financial Literacy curriculum was added to the classroom instruction.



2006

Loudoun Literacy Council's Adult Literacy Program volunteers were recognized by Volunteer Loudoun as the Outstanding Volunteer Team.



2012

Loudoun Literacy Council's Adult Literacy Program volunteers were recognized as the Outstanding Volunteer Team by Volunteer Loudoun.



2014

Financial Literacy curriculum was added to the classroom instruction.



2018

Launched Stepping Stones to Literacy, a bilingual Spanish literacy program for pre-literate English language learners.



2020

Loudoun Literacy Council was recognized by the Loudoun Chamber as a Small Business Award Finalist.

The STEP Literacy Program was introduced to provide books to children enrolled in Starting Towards Excellence in Preschool (STEP) - a Virginia funded preschool program for low-income children in partnership with Loudoun County Public Schools.



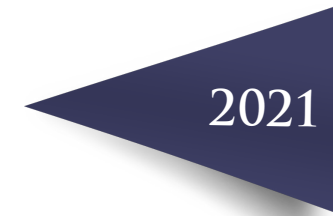
2017

The Adult Literacy Program partnered with Literacy for Life at the College of William and Mary to bring Health Education and Literacy (HEAL) Program to Loudoun County.



2019

Started School Success Program in partnership with Loudoun County Public School.



2021

Storytelling Workshops offered.

Inclusion in the Catalogue for Philanthropy's "One of the Best."

“ In a world driven by information, **LITERACY** is the most essential skill required. ”

If you are reading this, then you don't have a problem that more than 130,000 adults in Northern Virginia struggle with every day: illiteracy. Let's be clear, literacy is not just the ability to read and write. In today's world it is so much more. It means having the skills to access and navigate the online world, take care of our health, get a job and give our children a better life. In effect, literacy is what allows us to be active and productive members of our community and reach our full potential. It is the most critical skill.

WHY IT MATTERS

HEALTH

The American Journal of Public Health reports that the inability to read and understand health information accounts for \$232 billion in healthcare costs each year. Low literacy is linked to problems with accessing preventative medical care, delayed diagnosis, and following instructions such as prescription labels. Limited literacy actually shortens lifespan.

GENERATIONAL LITERACY

Literacy patterns are established early. The National Bureau of Economic Research tells us that 72% of children whose parents struggle with literacy will have the same struggle. Further, a child who is a poor reader at the end of first grade is nearly 90% likely to remain a poor reader in fourth grade.

EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment tied to low literacy levels accounts for an annual cost of \$225 billion in lost productivity, crime and lost tax revenue according to the National Council for Adult Learning.

POVERTY

The relationship between literacy and poverty is clear. The National Institute for Literacy estimates that 43% of adults with very low literacy skills live in poverty.

IMPORTANCE OF EARLY LITERACY INTERVENTIONS



By the age of 2, children who are read to regularly display greater language comprehension, larger vocabularies, and higher cognitive skills.



The single most significant factor influencing a child's early educational success is an introduction to books and being read to at home prior to beginning school.



The greatest amount of brain growth occurs between birth and age five.



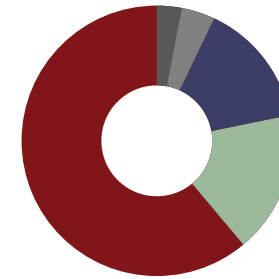
Children who have not developed some basic literacy skills by the time they enter kindergarten are 3-4 times more likely to drop out in later years.



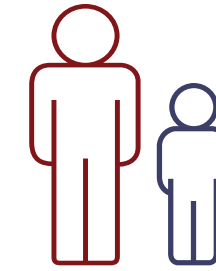
Children growing up in homes with access to books reach a higher level of education.

WHOM WE SERVE

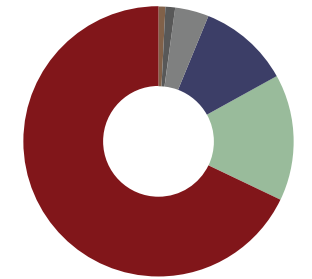
ADULTS



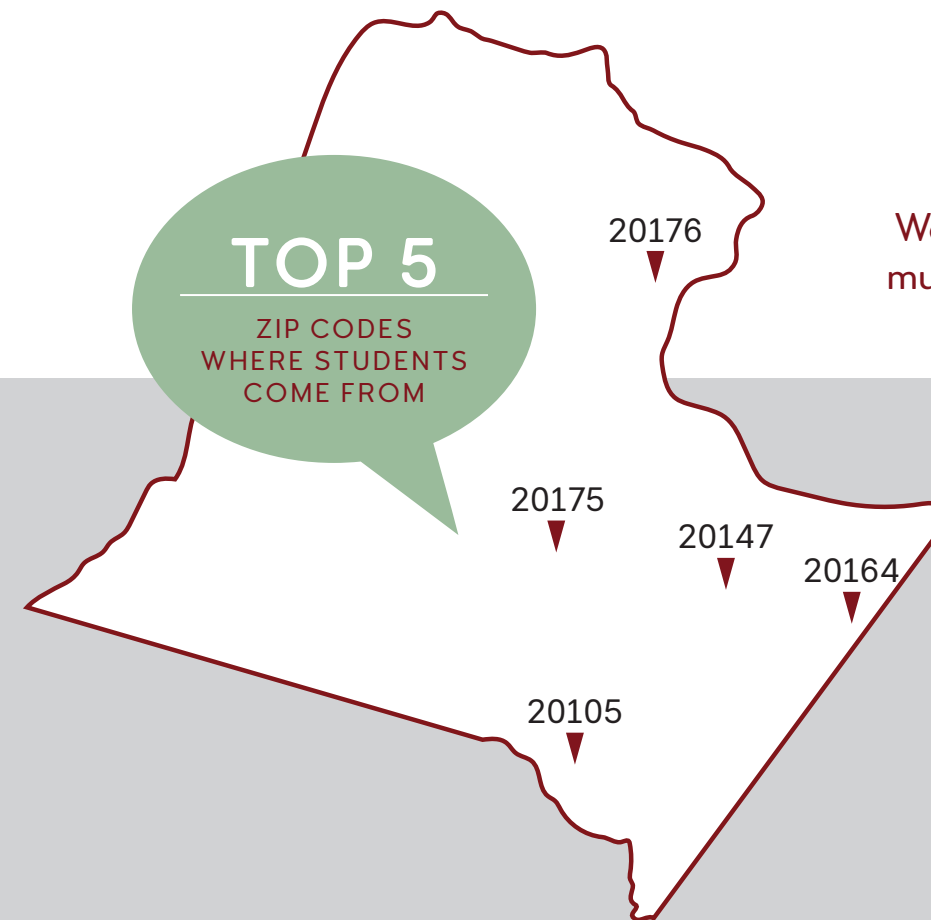
3% African American/Black
 4% Mixed Race/Other
 15% White
 17% Asian American/Pacific Islanders
 61% Hispanic/Latino
 84% Women



CHILDREN



American Indian/Alaska Native 1%
 Asian America/ Pacific Islanders 1%
 Mixed Race Other 4%
 African American/Black 11%
 White 15%
 Hispanic/Latino 68%



We admire our clients, many of whom are multilingual. Top dozen primary languages spoken by our clients:

1. Spanish
2. Urdu
3. Arabic
4. Farsi
5. French
6. Portuguese
7. Telugu
8. Mandarin
9. Pashtu
10. Dari
11. Somali
12. Korean

WHAT WE DO

FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMS

We know that parents are children's first teachers and that learning occurs well beyond the traditional school settings. To that end, Loudoun Literacy Council has developed programs and initiatives designed to partner with Loudoun County Public Schools, local community organizations and homeless shelters to meet the unique needs of the families we serve. Teaching parents how to promote a passion for reading and helping families build their own libraries is a key priority for us.



FALL FOR READING

Each fall we host "Fall for Reading" in partnership with the Loudoun County Public Library where we encourage members of the public to come to the Library, enjoy yummy snacks, fun activities, and great stories. The best part is taking home some new and gently used books.



SWEET DREAMS PROGRAM

We know that families who are homeless often struggle with literacy, so we launched the Sweet Dreams Program. Each week we send trained volunteers into local homeless shelters for a one-hour literacy program. Our volunteers read stories to the children and engage in fun activities. Additionally, we provide the parents with literacy tips and free books.



BABY BOOK BUNDLES

Yes, literacy really can begin on day one, so each year we deliver hundreds of Baby Book Bundles to new and expectant parents. Each bundle contains several baby books, including a bilingual baby book, and helpful instructions for how to read to your new baby.



FAMILY LITERACY NIGHTS

As part of our collaboration with Loudoun County Public Schools, we host Family Literacy Nights throughout the school year. Dinner is provided, followed by a fun and entertaining story time. We use the story time as a model to teach parents how to read to their own children. In addition, each family receives literacy tips for home reading and several gently used books. It's a fun night for everyone!



HEAD START AND STEP

Loudoun Literacy Council plays an important role in helping to deliver the Head Start and STEP (Starting Towards Excellence in Preschool) programs in Loudoun County Public Schools. We provide weekly reading sessions, mobile classroom libraries and monthly book packs so children can begin their very own home libraries. We also provide instructional materials for parents so that reading can continue well beyond the classroom.



BOOK BUILDER PROGRAM

Over the years, we have become a popular repository for gently used books. Through the Book Builder program, books are donated by individuals, companies and organizations; many holding book drives on our behalf. We then distribute these books to a growing number of community partners. Every year we are astonished by the level of generosity shown by the public as some 15,000 books are distributed to families across our community. We can't think of a better purpose for used books!



Early reading experiences and parental involvement in children's schooling generates higher levels of reading achievement and long-term learning success for the young child.

STORY WALK

One of our newer programs combines reading and fitness. Each Story Walk features a different storybook. Pages of the book are posted along a walking path and children walk (or run!) from one page to the next until they have read the entire story. When they are done there are fun activities and healthy snacks. Best of all, they get to take the story book home with them.



ADULT LITERACY

Many of the adults we serve do not have a strong command of the English language. Some possess a high school diploma or equivalent but have gaps in their skills such as reading and understanding basic information. Most are employed and are looking to advance their professional skills. They come to us with a wealth of life experiences and knowledge. Many are motivated to learn because they want to serve as role models for their children and help their children to succeed in school.

SCHOOL SUCCESS

We know that success in school depends on a strong parent-school relationship. The School Success program offers classes to parents with limited English proficiency and who have students in the Loudoun County Public School system. We teach parents how to navigate the school system, including how to prepare for a parent-teacher conference, access the online portal, and understand report cards..

ESOL CLASSES

We teach English to speakers of other languages. Classes are offered on a range of proficiency levels from early beginner to advance level..

STEPPING STONES TO LITERACY

Bilingual Spanish program for pre-literate English learners.

GED PREPARATION

Our classes help students prepare for the GED test.

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Our financial literacy workshops are designed to help learners understand banking and basic financial principles such as budgeting, credit, investments and home ownership.

HEALTH LITERACY

We offer award winning workshops designed to help our students navigate the healthcare system and take control of their health and wellness.

JOBSITE LITERACY

We partner with local businesses and organizations to provide customized work-focused English instruction at their work site.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WEEK

September is Workforce Development month. Each year we partner with Loudoun Workforce Resource Center to provide workshops designed to teach practical skills that help adult students navigate the world of business.

STORYTELLING WORKSHOPS

We know that low levels of literacy can lead to loneliness and even depression because people are unable to connect with their community. A critical factor of belonging is the ability to share your story. Our Storytelling Workshops empower students to tell their own story and connect in meaningful ways with their community.

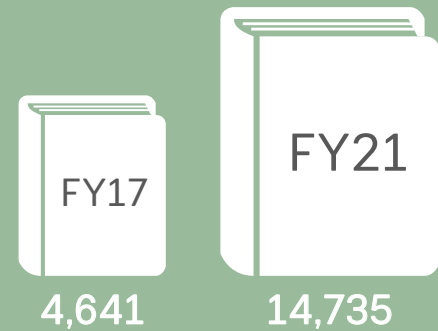
CITIZENSHIP TEST PREPARATION

Our classes in civics and citizenship prepare students for the citizenship test.

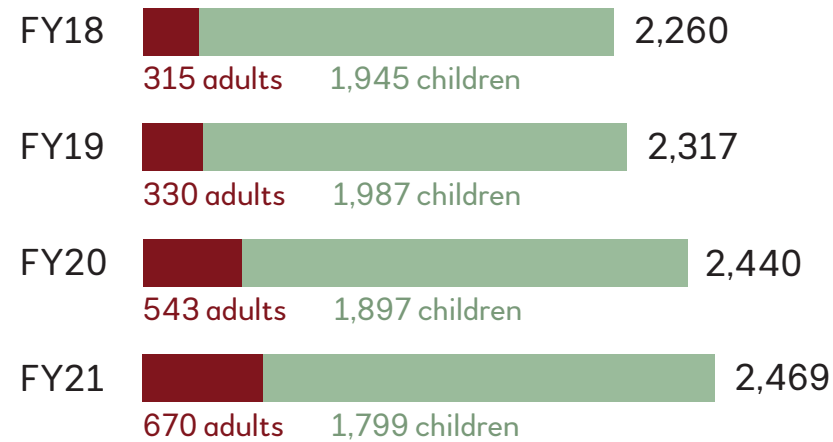


BY THE NUMBERS

BOOKS DISTRIBUTED



CLIENTS SERVED



In FY21, we served an estimated **additional 11,630 individuals** with book and book pack distributions and related services.

VOLUNTEERS

- 249** volunteers helped support the organization operations and programs
- 2,753** hours volunteering provided by our volunteers
- \$78,584.89** value of volunteer time
(Based on Virginia's value of volunteer time, Independent Sector and Do Good Institute, 2021)
- 103** volunteers trained
- 112** hours in training provided at **12** sessions



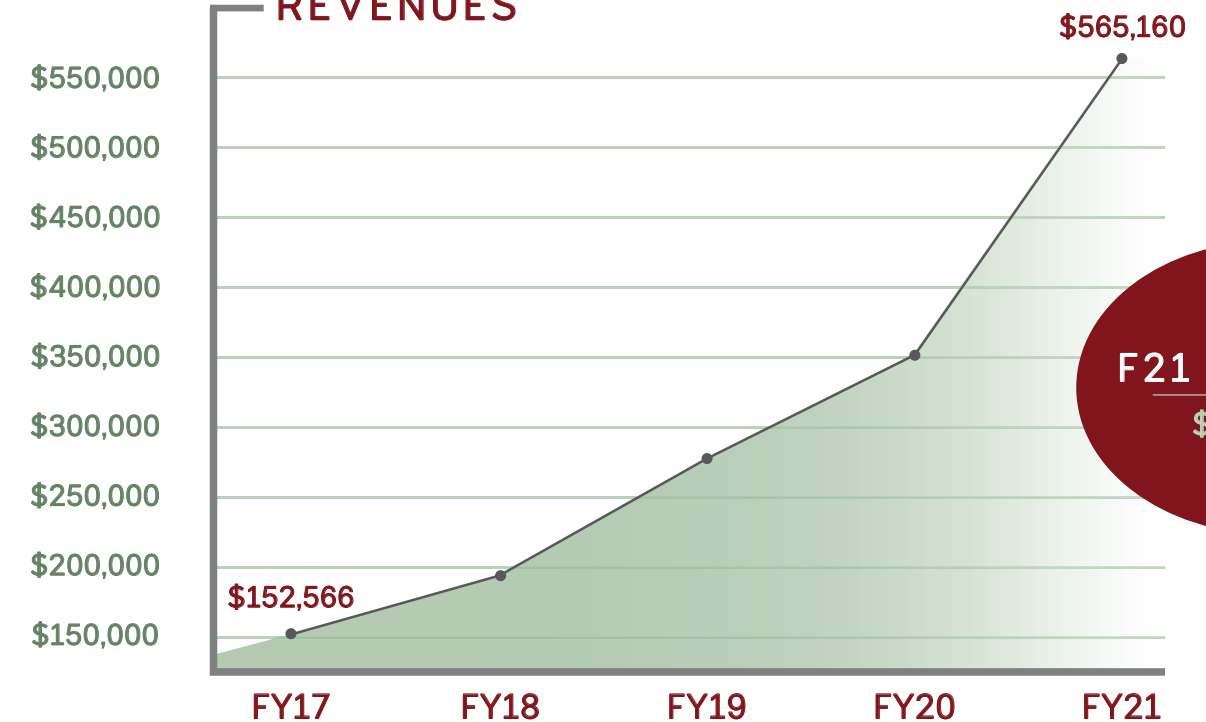
20% students
80% adults



22% men
78% women

FINANCIALS

REVENUES



STAFF

42% BIPOC
100% WOMEN



BOARD

60% BIPOC
70% WOMEN



OFFICERS

67% BIPOC
67% WOMEN



BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color)

OUR PARTNERS

Loudoun Literacy Council has cultivated many community partnerships to further our reach and impact in the community. Some of our partnerships include:

The ADAMS Center
 All Ages Read Together
 Asha for Women
 Ashby Ponds
 Claude Moore Community Builders
 Community Empowerment of Northern Virginia
 Crossroads Jobs
 Dulles South Food Pantry
 Educando con Amor
 George Mason University
 Head Start & STEP (Loudoun County Public Schools)
 HealthWorks for Northern Virginia
 Heronview Apartments
 INMED Opportunity Center
 Inova Cares Clinic for Women
 Little Free Libraries
 Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter
 Loudoun Cares
 Loudoun Census Complete Count Coalition
 Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce
 Loudoun County Dental Clinic
 Loudoun County Department of Family Services
 Loudoun County Department of Parks and Recreation
 Loudoun County Economic Development
 Loudoun County Government
 Loudoun County Health Department
 Loudoun County Public Library

Loudoun County Public Schools
 Loudoun County School Nutrition Services
 Loudoun County Workforce Resource Center
 Loudoun Free Clinic
 Loudoun Hunger Relief
 Loudoun Human Services Network
 Loudoun Human Services Strategic Plan Advisory Committee
 Loudoun Pediatric Obesity Coalition
 Loudoun Workforce Resource Center
 NEST 4-US
 Northern Virginia Community College
 Northern Virginia Family Services (Early Head Start)
 Northern Virginia Family Services
 Nueva Mayoria de Virginia en Loudoun and Western Fairfax
 Purcellville Main Street Apartments
 R.O.C.K. Leesburg
 Sterling Foundation
 Sugarland Run HOA
 Town of Leesburg
 United Way National Capital Area
 Volunteers of America Homeless Shelter
 Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts
 Women Giving Back
 YMCA



OUR STAFF

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 Adult Literacy Program Director
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 Family Literacy Program Director
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Pilar Lorca, Vice Chair
Clint Thomas, Treasurer
Parvez Khan, Secretary
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Kristina Spitler, General Counsel

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LOUDOUN LITERACY COUNCIL

CHANGING LIVES THROUGH LEARNING

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