



2007/2008 ANNUAL REPORT

July 1 – June 30

*The mission of Blue Ridge Literacy Council is
to provide adults in Henderson County
the English communication and literacy skills
they need to reach their full potential as
individuals, parents, workers and citizens.*

**P.O. Box 1728
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www.litcouncil.org**

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Head of the Class

At 69 years old, Clara Mills is both a great-grandmother and a recent graduate of the Early Childhood Certificate program at Blue Ridge Community College. Although the Literacy Council can't take much credit for Clara's status of great-grandmother, she was paired up through our ABE program with her tutor, Louise Reid, two years ago.

With five children, thirteen grandchildren and two great-grandchildren of her own, Clara has always been around kids, so working as a Head Teacher at Alice's Playground, a childcare center in Hendersonville, was a natural fit for her. Working there, however, required that she meet certain state standards for childcare workers. So, at 67 years old, Clara went back to school.

Clara realized she was going to need some additional support in her studies. "It didn't dawn on me," she says, "that I wasn't a good reader. I knew there were some words I didn't know, but I'd just skip over them and move on. But that didn't work so well when there were tests to pass." Being paired with her tutor Louise, a former nursery school director and community college instructor of early childhood courses, seemed another good fit for Clara.

Louise and Clara have met steadily for over two years to help Clara meet her course requirements and attain her goals. Louise believes that it is Clara's perseverance and sense of humor that have helped her to balance a very full life. Louise knew she had a very special student who was "very, very determined that she would acquire the skills she needs to maintain the job she loves."

Now, with certificate in hand, and a desire to get her GED, Clara serves as a role model to others. "I have a granddaughter," she says, "who has decided to go back to college and get a Masters Degree. She says, 'If my granny can go to school, so can I!'"

Motivation Is Contagious

When Hilario Tapia first came to the Literacy Council in 2006, he had lived in the United States for 17 years and spoke English quite well. He could also read in English. His problem was writing. He said, "I work in a factory doing maintenance. In my work I must order parts and write other things. I need help."

Our ESL Coordinator placed Hilario in a small-group ESL class to begin working on his writing skills. She also asked him if he was interested in becoming a United States citizen. The answer was a definitive yes. "I want to be able to vote," he said.

In the spring of 2007 BRLC offered a 12-week Citizenship class taught by tutor Jean Terry. Hilario signed up. To our surprise, he brought with him his brother, Agustin Tapia, and his sister-in-law, Maria Tapia, who were also inspired to attain their citizenship.

All three Tapias completed the Citizenship class, but had to wait for an appointment to take the test, which usually takes months. Hilario asked for a private tutor so he could continue to improve his writing skills and was matched with tutor David Winnett. Maria, knowing she had a long way to go to have both the oral and writing skills needed to pass the test, also asked for more help and was matched with tutor Myra Morris. Agustin was confident that he was ready for the test, so decided not to take further classes...that is until several months later when he received his citizenship exam appointment and panicked. "I need to review for the test," he said. "Can somebody help me? Once again "somebody" was tutor Jean Terry.

Agustin was the first to take the test and became a citizen in January 2008. This time he didn't stop. He wanted to keep improving his English and asked Jean if he could continue to study with her. They still meet.

Hilario took the test in February 2008 and also passed. He and David kept meeting until a change in Hilario's work schedule no longer allowed him time to study.

Maria also took the citizenship test in February 2008. Unfortunately, she didn't pass. Her oral skills had greatly improved, but she didn't pass the writing portion of the exam. She did not give up. She and Myra worked diligently on dictation and writing right up until the date of Maria's second test in June, and she passed! But just passing the test isn't enough for her either, and she continues to study with Myra to improve her overall English.

This family's motivation has inspired us all, and we congratulate them on their achievements.

2007/2008 Highlights

Blue Ridge Literacy Council's Student Achievements Continue To Soar—Each year our program is evaluated on outcomes set by the Federal Workforce Investment Act. This year our students surpassed the standard by a whopping 96 ½ points. In 07/08 we matched 317 students: 236 reached the 12 hour “follow-up threshold.” Although this is fewer students than 06/07, the quality of instruction increased dramatically. 229 of the 236 students followed up on achieved 10,163 goals—a 45% increase over 06/07. And while they were achieving more goals, they were also increasing their test scores. Ninety-two students advanced one or more Federal Adult Literacy Levels. Since we worked with fewer students, we were able to spend more time on program improvement. Methods for teaching test-taking skills, practice materials for the tests, and the new Tutor Resource File all contributed to these successes.

BRLC Awarded Student Success Activity Grant—BRLC was awarded a Student Success Activity Grant from North Carolina Community College System. The purpose was to showcase students and their successes—and showcase them we did! All students and tutors were invited to write an essay about themselves and their experiences at the Literacy Council; 55 participated. Many tutors also used the writing exercises to enhance their students' regular tutoring sessions. The compilation of these essays is entitled *A Story Worth Telling*. The title says it all—each participant has a story worth telling—and has told it in his or her own words. We are grateful to be able to publish these stories and show the world the heart of our program. The grant allowed us to have 800 copies of the book professionally printed so they can be disseminated in the community as a tool to recruit future students, tutors, and donors.

Monte Carlo Comes to Hendersonville—The inaugural date for our new fundraiser, Monte Carlo Night, was July 19, 2008 which actually put it in 08/09 fiscal year. But the incredible amount of work that went into accomplishing the event started in 2007, and was, indeed, a highlight of the year. We partnered with Vocational Solutions to bring a fun-filled night to Kenmure Country Club and raise funds for both agencies. Those who attended spent the evening playing poker, roulette, black jack, and craps for the chance to win fabulous prizes. It was a magical evening, and one we plan to repeat — on July 25, 2009!

Program Statistics 2007-2008

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

# Students Achieving 1 or More Goals	229
# of Goals Achieved	10,163
# Completed Federal Literacy Level 2007/08	92

STUDENTS

Total Matched July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008	317
Total with 12+ hours (counted for goal achievement)	236
Basic Lit	40
ESL 196	
Active Students on 06/30/2008	185
# Separated from Program in 2007/08	121

VOLUNTEERS

# Tutors Matched in 2007/08	178
# Other Volunteers in 2007/08	71
# New Tutors Trained in 2007/08	44
# Active Tutors Separated in 2007/08	28

Total Volunteer Hours Reported **24,086**

Total Value of Volunteer Service** **\$469,918.00**

**Based on \$19.51 per hour as determined by Independent Sector as the value of a volunteer hour in 2007

Statement of Activities
July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008*

Revenue and Support

Contributions	32,424.00
Fed'l and County Gov't Grants	77,904.00
United Way	26,000.00
Fundraising Events	30,300.00
Contributed Use of Facilities	15,000.00
Contributed Goods & Services	5,300.00
Gain on Investments	(14,454.00)
Other Income	1,974.00
Interest Income	2,042.00
Total Revenue and Support	<u>\$176,490.00</u>

Expenses

Program Services	180,779.00
Management and General	22,048.00
Fund Raising Expense	11,032.00
Total Expenses	<u>\$213,859.00</u>

Change in Net Assets During Year* **(\$37,369.00)**

**reflects a grant of \$37,000 received in 06/07 for use in 07/08. 07/08 Financial audit available upon request.*

Statement of Financial Position
June 30, 2008*

Assets

<u>Current Assets</u>	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	48,284.00
Receivables	537.00
Total Current Assets	48,821.00
<u>Long Term Assets</u>	
Investments	26,899.00
Property and Equipment, Net	9,961.00
Total Long Term Assets	36,860.00
Total Assets	<u>\$85,681.00</u>

Liabilities and Net Assets

<u>Current Liabilities</u>	
Accounts Payable	219.00
Total Current Liabilities	<u>219.00</u>
<u>Net Assets</u>	
Unrestricted	
Board Designated	\$21,617.00
Undesignated	56,878.00
Total Unrestricted	<u>78,495.00</u>
Temporarily Restricted	<u>6,967.00</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$85,681.00</u>

Many Thanks to Our 2007 – 2008 Volunteers

** indicates 100 or more hours*

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