

Literacy Campaign for Monterey County

Revised: November 24, 2009

- **Overview:** In October 2005, the Community Foundation launched a **multi-year, multi-million dollar, civic engagement initiative to open doors to educational and economic opportunities through improving the literacy skills of young adults in Monterey County.**
 - ↪ The initiative is a five-year collaboration among grant makers, businesses, government and non-profit agencies, neighborhood groups, educators, families, and individuals.
 - ↪ The main beneficiaries will be young adults between the ages of 18-35, particularly those who are parents, for whom literacy is a barrier to success.
 - ↪ The whole community will become more aware of the importance of literacy and the ways to improve it.
 - ↪ The results will be measured, reported, replicated, and sustained.
 - ↪ \$300,000 to \$500,000 in grants have been awarded annually since 2006.
- **Research shows:**
 - ↪ Lack of English language and literacy skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing skills) is a barrier to entry and advancement in many types of employment.
 - ↪ Higher paying jobs demand literacy in English.
 - ↪ Children from homes with high literacy skills have greater success in school and at work.
 - ↪ Children who cannot read by the 4th grade are among the first to drop out of high school.
 - ↪ Literacy in one's native (first) language makes it easier to learn a second language.
- **In Monterey County:**
 - ↪ 11% of adults are not literate in any language.
 - ↪ 25% of adults read below the 4th grade level and only 68% have completed high school.
 - ↪ 55% of adults seeking services say their inability to speak English is a barrier.
 - ↪ 46% of children enter kindergarten without the necessary pre-academic skills.
- **Literacy is the key to doors of opportunity:**
 - ↪ It is essential to success in the workplace.
 - ↪ It steers young people towards lives of positive contributions.
 - ↪ It is a measure of a community's economic health and vitality.
 - ↪ It is crucial for participation in our democratic processes.
- **The Literacy Campaign is guided by a Steering Committee made up of educators, funders, service providers, business leaders, and community members. They are:**

Diane Cordero de Noriega (Campaign Chair), Mary Adams, Jim Bogart, Alfred Diaz-Infante, Pamela Dozier, Mary Ellison, Linda English, Liz Estrella, Len Foster, Bob Harper, Jeanne Herrick, Laurel Lee-Alexander, Irene Nares-Guzicki, Leslie Payne, Elliott Robinson, Francine Rodd, and Aaron Scoby.

➤ **Four Primary Outcomes of the Literacy Campaign:**

1. YOUNG ADULTS, AGES 18 TO 35 YEARS, WILL ATTAIN LITERACY THROUGH THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL.
2. YOUNG ADULTS, AGES 18 TO 35 YEARS, WILL READ TO CHILDREN TO IMPROVE THEIR OWN LITERACY AND HELP CHILDREN SUCCEED IN SCHOOL.
3. YOUNG ADULTS, AGES 18 TO 35 YEARS, WILL BE ABLE TO BECOME EMPLOYED AND ADVANCE IN LOCAL WORKPLACES.
4. ALL PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY WILL SUPPORT LITERACY AS A BASIC HUMAN NEED.

➤ **Since December 2006, over \$1,100,000 in grants has been awarded to address these outcomes. Examples of grants include:**

- ↪ Alisal Community Healthy Start in partnership with the Soledad Adult School and the Housing Advocacy Council *for basic literacy programs in East Salinas and Soledad*
- ↪ Carmel Adult School *to begin a family literacy program in Big Sur*
- ↪ Central Coast Citizenship Project *for workplace literacy programs in Soledad*
- ↪ Community Housing Improvements Systems Planning Association (CHISPA) *for basic literacy programs in Greenfield*
- ↪ Farmworker Institute for Education and Leadership Development (FIELD) *for basic adult literacy programs in Greenfield and Pajaro*
- ↪ King City Family Resource Center *to pilot a basic literacy program in King City*
- ↪ Monterey County Free Libraries (MCFL) *to expand tutoring programs at Seaside and Soledad libraries*
- ↪ Volunteer Center for Monterey County *to recruit literacy volunteers countywide*

Questions about the Literacy Campaign?

Please contact Janet Shing at the Community Foundation for Monterey County: (831) 375-9712, ext. 137 or janet@cfmco.org