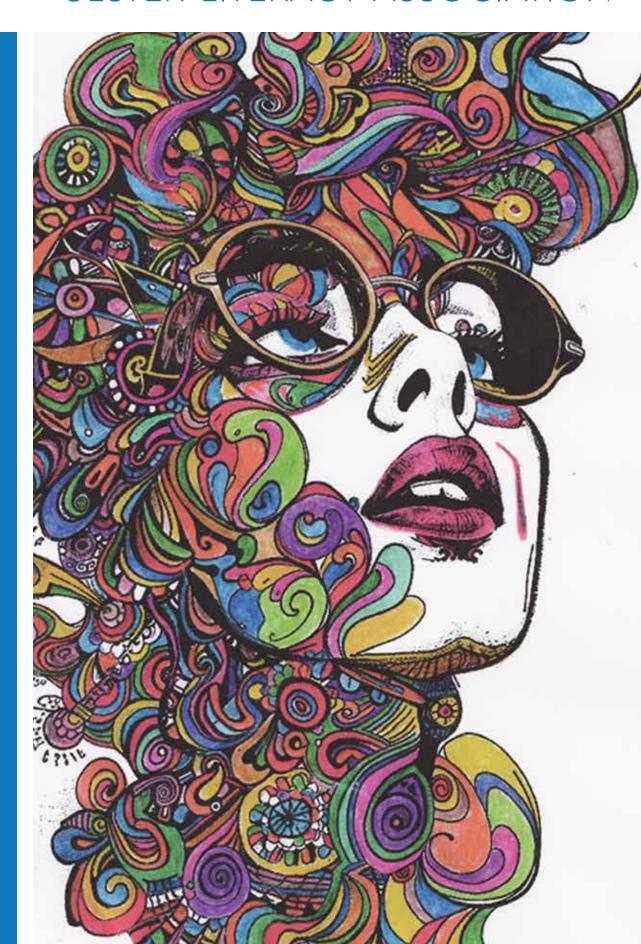


2025 ANNUAL REPORTULSTER LITERACY ASSOCIATION



About Ulster Literacy Association

The founders of Ulster Literacy Association envisioned a society where everyone has access to life-changing learning through literacy. That is why our mission is to provide adults with personalized instruction in writing, reading, and English communication skills.

With the support of trained volunteer tutors, our adult learners achieve goals such as securing better jobs, passing driver's tests, becoming US citizens, earning GEDs, and playing an active role in their children's education and community.

We have **397** adult learners, a **6%** increase from last year

46% enrolled in **English Literacy** instruction (from 25 different countries)

54% enrolled in **Basic Literacy** instruction

There are 110 learners enrolled in One to One Tutoring

89 learners are enrolled in **English for Parents** classes

198 learners are enrolled in The Correctional Education Program

We have **122 active tutors** a **16%** increase from last year

Our volunteers donated 3,620 hours

A Word From Our Board President

We could all use a cup of resilience these days. There is so much out there that is pulling on our attention, pulling us here and tugging us there. It takes a great amount of energy to remain focused on our priorities and our purpose.

Nonprofit organizations are fragile entities, loss of a grant can decimate a key program, loss of a staff person can set things back for months. That is why it is so important for nonprofit organizations to have a diversified funding base and succession plans in place. That is also why nonprofits need to be nimble and resilient. There is a mission statement to guide the work but it is also important to have stated values and the ability to bend but not break.

In our current unstable environment, we at ULA are stretching in certain ways but we always find our way back to our mission to provide adults with personalized instruction in writing, reading, and English communication skills.

This past year has shown us the underlying strength that supports our work. By strengthening the connective tissue of our community-our tutors, our learners, our staff, board, and our unwavering supporters-our mantra to transform communities through literacy continues to lead us forward. Much has happened this year-several new grants, the continued growth and success of our program in the Ulster County jail, bolstered by an additional \$40,000 in support, two new members of our board of directors, and an expanded Ulster Literacy Association Day.

We have also experienced great loss with the passing of two deeply committed friends of ULA, Debra Benn and Linda Greenow. They will be missed but also remembered for years to come.

I thank all who touch our work, guiding us forward, letting us bend but not break and always returning to our reason for being. That will never change.

Kristin WengerBoard President

A Word From Our Executive Director

I am deeply grateful for the unwavering support that has defined the Ulster Literacy community this past year. Our 2024-2025 program year faced unprecedented challenges and a shifting funding landscape. Reliable funding sources became unpredictable or vanished. Other nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and social service agencies across Ulster County experienced similar uncertainty, compounding the difficulties for our adult learners. These individuals rely on a diverse network of community services while often facing challenges such as employment, healthcare, personal safety, and food insecurity, all while working to improve their literacy. In 2025, the Ulster Literacy community also lost two dear friends: Debra Benn, an idea-driven and vivacious board member, and Linda Greenow, a longtime English for Parents teacher known for cultivating enthusiasm and friendship in her classroom.

Amidst the current confusion affecting our community, our vision of a society where everyone has access to life-changing learning through literacy remained constant. With the support of our board of directors, staff, volunteers, donors, and community partners, we provided 199 adult learners with 3,620 volunteer-hours and 600 classroom hours of instruction last year.

Our Correctional Education Program at the Ulster County Jail delivered 1,340 hours of classroom instruction to 198 incarcerated participants in creative writing, GED preparation, and art therapy. We also introduced the high school equivalency exam (GED), allowing six participants to earn their high school diplomas. One graduate said "Attending these programs really helped me learn there is a lot of opportunity in life and for me to become the best man I could be for my family and, especially, for myself."

These mission-affirming accomplishments would not have been possible without stronger community partnerships. I am constantly reminded that our impact is amplified through collaboration. Last year, we were fortunate to deepen several partnerships: the Ulster County Sheriff's Office provided increased support and funding, the Ulster Immigrant Defence Network (UIDN) promoted our volunteer opportunities, and a new bookstore, Common Good in Ellenville, joined ULA Day.

As Ulster Literacy celebrates its 45th Anniversary in 2026, we are grateful to do so with stronger partnerships, diversified funding streams, and deeper community engagement. I am continually inspired by our dedicated volunteers, learners, board of directors, and tireless staff. Together, we will continue working to transform communities through literacy.

Amy LenardExecutive Director

Ulster Literacy Association Programs

One-to-One-Tutoring

We provide Basic Literacy instruction for adults who speak English and want to improve their reading and writing, as well as English Literacy classes for those looking to learn English as a new language.

We are the only organization in Ulster County offering free one-toone literacy tutoring for adults. Our program pairs each learner with a trained volunteer tutor, working together to create a personalized learning plan based on the learner's individual goals, both personal and professional. Sessions are scheduled at times and locations that work best for both the tutor and learner, making our program accessible to those with busy work schedules, limited transportation, or other barriers that make it difficult to attend traditional classes.



One of our learners, Angmaya, became an American citizen on December 13, 2024. An additional three learners became US citizens last year.

77 learners completed at least 30 hours of instruction.

52 improved by at least one literacy level.

24 obtained or improved their employment.

English for Parents Classes

We offer classroom instruction for parents and caregivers, with on-site childcare for young children. These classes are held in various locations across Ulster County, including public schools, libraries, churches, and community centers. Our learners work closely with a lead teacher and a team of volunteer tutors to strengthen their English skills, empowering them to become more involved in their children's education and the local community.

Beyond regular classroom instruction, classroom teachers and volunteers have helped students to do the following: write emails to a child's teacher, register children for school, and complete Medicaid and other medical applications and forms.



Teresa Detweiler teaches one of our English classes in Kingston, NY. She poses here with learners who hold their literacy certificates.

14 learners got new jobs.

3 learners obtained their driver's license.

4 learners began attending GED classes in addition to English.

Ulster Literacy Association Programs

Correctional Education Program Ulster County Jail

Ulster Literacy Association's partnership with the Ulster County Jail began 21 years ago. After a pause during the pandemic, classes resumed in April 2023, now led by Ulster Literacy Association's lead teachers and supported by volunteer tutors.

Our **GED Program** is designed for adults over the age of 21 who have not obtained their high school diploma. Certified instructors lead classes for 10 hours each week, supported by volunteer tutors who offer additional instruction.

The **Writing Workshop** helps individuals use creative writing as a tool for self-expression and introspection. In each weekly workshop, participants discuss a topic before writing about it, then share their work with the class. Writing topics have included appreciation, empathy, ambivalence, loneliness, and resilience.

The **Art Therapy Workshop** emphasizes self-expression through art and discussion. Participants create sketches inspired by a print or a theme introduced by the instructor. Afterwards, they discuss their artistic choices with the instructor and classmates. Conversation and encouragement are essential components of every class.

The two programs I have been attending here at the Ulster County Jail have been a sense of relief while being incarcerated.

When I step into the program room, I do not feel that I am incarcerated. I have learned so much from Rich and Andrea regarding coping with my life problems. There is always a better way to resolve situations. I know the change I need in my life after speaking with Rich every Friday. Clear-minded conversations and writing helped me understand I have power and authority in my life to choose the people, places, and things that will benefit my life.

Attending these programs really helped me to learn that there is a lot of opportunity in life, and for me to become the best man I can be for my family, and, especially, for myself.

John

September 2025

This piece has been revised for clarity while striving to keep the original voice intact.





Clockwise from left: GED graduate with Jail Program instructors
Rich Silverman and Jane Quinn, and Program Coordinator Joann
Dayton-Wolf. GED graduate with Jail Program Instructors Rich Silverman
and Andrea Harmon. GED graduates with Jail Program Instructors Rich
Silverman, Andrea Harmon, and ULA executive director Amy Lenard.



Ulster Literacy Association Programs

Correctional Education Program Ulster County Jail



When I first took office in 2019, the GED program was only offered up to age 21. We expanded it with the help of Ulster Literacy Association so that now anyone can get their GED.

The fact that 17 people took the test in one year and 7 of them received their diploma is absolutely amazing. Receiving a GED can be the first step of an enlightenment for individuals that never get recognized. Luckily when I was in the Marine Corps I got promoted 10 times. I was in the State Police for 25 years and received a lot of awards. I've been recognized for my efforts but these folks here don't get that recognition that jumpstarts something in the human spirit.

That's why Ulster Literacy Association is such an important, impactful part of the I.G.N.I.T.E program and I can't thank you folks enough.

Sheriff Juan Figueroa Ulster County Sheriff

Incarcerated individuals who participate in adult education programs are 43% less likely to return to prison within three years of their release than those who do not.

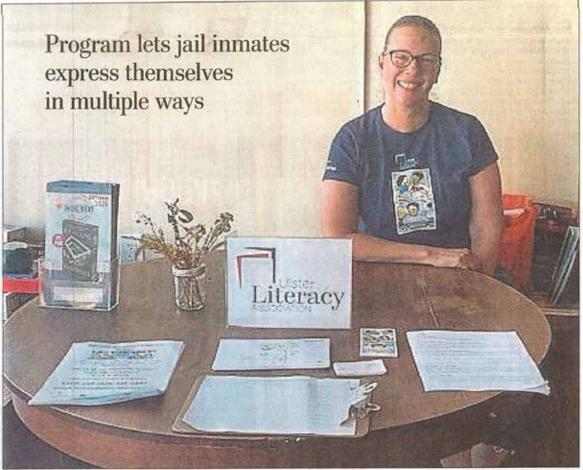
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In an undated photo, Ulster Literacy Association Executive Director Amy Lenard recruits volunteers for the non-profit at the Common good event in Ellenville, N.Y.

By Brian Hubert

bhubert@freemanonline.com

KINGSTON, N.Y. » Ulster Literacy Association's Correctional Ed-ucation Program offers three separate educational courses to people incarcerated at the Ulster County Jail. They include literacy, writing, and a General Equivalency Diploma program.

Amy Lenard, Ulster Literacy's

organization has done educational programming in the Ulster County Jail for more than 20 years, it has been able to ex-pand the program extensively in the last few years. The program has served more than 100 participants since July, she said, adding that nearly half of the incarcerated adults at the jail have taken one of the non-profit's programs.

A team of six paid instruc-

executive director, said while the tors and five volunteers offers

instruction six days a week. The weekly schedule consists of 25 hours of GED instruction, 10 hours a week of writing, and 15 weeks of art.

"Sheriff (Juan) Figueroa has been a huge supporter of educational and workplace oppor-tunities in the jail," Lenard said. "We were able to expand with the support of Sheriff Figueroa and his team at the jail."

The program has also gar-

nered the support of the Ulster County Legislature. In May, the Legislature approved \$64,000 in county funding for the program under an agreement with the Sheriff's Office.

Lenard said sometimes the participants work off coloring pages. Other times, she added, they are given a blank piece of paper and use it to produce their own work.

LITERACY » PAGE 4

ULA in the Community



New board members

Wendy Saul

Wendy joined the board of Ulster Literacy Association in 2024, a natural progression after a lengthy career as a literacy educator.

Wendy earned her BA in English from Knox College, her Master's from the University of Chicago, and her PhD from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She taught both graduate and undergraduate students at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and wrote extensively about the importance of active learning and critical thinking in teaching reading and writing.

Beyond her work with urban schools in the US, Wendy has led programs in Eastern and Central Europe, Central Asia, Latin America, Africa, and China. In 2005, she accepted an Endowed Chair in Education and International Studies at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Wendy received the Chancellor's Award from the University System of Maryland and the Presidential Award from the University of Missouri System for her efforts in fostering cross-cultural communication and understanding.



Leonora Wiener

Leonora Wiener joined the Ulster Literacy Association's board as a director in 2025 because she believes that the ability to read, write, and communicate effectively is the key to reaching one's highest potential. Leonora is excited to help the organization as it implements its strategic plan, which includes expanding its focus on digital literacy, diversifying its tutor base, and increasing awareness of the organization throughout the county.

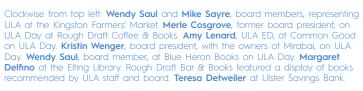
Leonora is a certified coach (ACC) and consultant working with nonprofit professionals across various fields, including healthcare, education, criminal justice, media, consumer advocacy, and more. Prior to consulting, Leonora was an executive at Consumer Reports, Ford Foundation, Scholastic, Time Inc., and the City of New York. She holds a BA from Cornell University and an executive coaching certificate from Columbia University. Leonora and her husband reside in Olivebridge, NY.



















Tutor Appreciation Day



Clockwise from top left:
ULA friends Myrna Sameth
and Eli Basch. Recipients
of 10-year Tutor Recognition
Award Donna Rutlin, Ann
Halloran, and Margo
McLoone. Tutors Peter
Brown and Amy
McCracken. Tutor Arlene
Brimer and ULA friend
Kathleen Dittus. Jail
Program Instructor Rich
Silverman. Tutor Joanne
Arcadipane and ULA friend
Kathleen Cloonan. ULA
board president Kristin
Wenger.













Speaking with my students makes me feel good. It is a bright part of my day. I know I am helping someone at that time, which is a great feeling. Getting to know my students as friends has been great. I have learned much about them as people and about their culture.

Bruce Jackson

Tutor

When I first met the man, he wanted to earn his GED, so we began.

As I taught him English, I quickly learned that he excelled in writing. Math was more of a challenge. He had grown up in the system and had not been back to school since 7th grade. But he was determined.

He devoted all of his available time to improving his skills in all subjects. Over time, I noticed his demeanor changing. His face was now alive with interest during classes, and he sat up straighter. Eventually, he took the test and passed every subject, proudly graduating.

A few weeks later, he approached me in another pod, and I almost didn't recognize him: he was now well-groomed, well-spoken, and courteous.

Education makes a difference.

Jane Quinn

Jail Program GED Teacher

As a recently retired professor and college administrator, I noticed more students struggling in liberal arts subjects, not because of the subject matter, but due to difficulties comprehending dense textbooks and writing effectively—issues rooted in literacy. Recognizing the challenge, I decided to address adult literacy after retirement, realizing that effective tutoring, especially for English-language learners, demands significant training and support. Through an acquaintance, I learned about Ulster Literacy Association, underwent comprehensive online training, and was soon matched with a learner eager to achieve professional goals established in her home country.

ULA's thorough training prepared me to work collaboratively with my learner, who bravely juggles family and work while pursuing her ambitions. Together, we set clear goals, continually adapting our strategies to support her progress. ULA's guidance, teaching materials, encouragement, and technological resources have been invaluable. Peer connections through regular coffee meetings have also provided much-needed support and camaraderie, helping mitigate the isolating nature of one-on-one tutoring.

I am appreciative of ULA's careful matching process and ongoing support, which have made this experience deeply rewarding. While progress is rarely linear, the ongoing journey with my tutee and fellow tutors inspires me each week. I am grateful for both the opportunity to contribute and for the encouragement received along the way.

Kevin Stoner

Tutor

Tutor Appreciation Day

I've been working with the same learner for over a year now in what was intended to be a short-term placement, and it has been a deeply rewarding experience for both of us.

We spent our initial sessions working through his frustration with the barriers that his level of literacy presented in his life and establishing trust. Over time, he was able to study for and pass a learner's permit test, and eventually went on to get his driver's license. Each goal he achieved was a win for both of us, and created momentum for him to pursue other educational and professional goals in his life.

Witnessing his renewal of hope and optimism, even when life is difficult, has been equally invigorating for me. Every time he leaves the office he promises, "The day I hit the lotto, I'm coming straight here!"

Teresa Detweiler

lutor

If you try it, you will most likely enjoy helping others learn what you know. It is a commitment to plan lessons and work with your learner, but the time put in is very rewarding. The learners I have worked with one-on-one and in groups have been very appreciative of whatever I do/have done.

Christine Rinaldi

Tutor

Volunteering has deepened my gratitude for the many advantages I have had in my life. It has also taught me patience. I have learned that there are many people in this community ready and able to help others make their lives here and succeed. There is a deep vein of kindness and community here, exemplified by ULA, that is ready to step up when it sees a need.

Mike Ferris

Tutor

I appreciate that tutoring requires a sort of 'beginner's mind,' in order to put yourself in the learner's shoes — a very useful life skill.

Marianne Berry Tutor

I have benefited enormously from tutoring ESL to a variety of adult learners. The work has been both challenging and very rewarding on many levels.

Peter Brown

Tutor

The tutoring I've done with about nine learners since 2014 has greatly enriched my retirement. I have been able to use my skills as a special education teacher to tutor students from different countries with diverse abilities. I have also learned new skills in teaching adult literacy and English language learners. I now recognize how much these English Learners contribute to our community.

I remain connected with many of my learners and their families. In fact, today, I am going to a birthday party for a former student. I have helped this learner and his wife become citizens and continue to help them with technology and literacy tasks. A young Chinese couple even considers me a "Grandmama" to their two children. I helped the young woman earn her LPN certification, and now she is working and studying to become a nurse practitioner.

Volunteering and being part of Ulster Literacy Association has given my retirement meaningful purpose by allowing me to contribute my skills to the community - a true "win-win" for everyone.

Marie Barnes

Tutor

















In Memoriam: Linda Greenow



Linda Greenow passed away in August, leaving an immense hole in the hearts of all who knew her as a colleague and teacher. She joined Ulster Literacy Association in 2014 after retiring from SUNY New Paltz, where she was a professor of Geography and Latin American Studies. She taught the morning English for Parents class and was also part of the volunteer tutor training team.

The following testimony, written by a former learner and edited for clarity, expresses much of what we would like to say about Linda:

At every stage of our journey, we find people-friends or confidants-who can occupy a great place in our lives. But in the end, time takes us down other paths, and they are nothing more than a chapter in the long story of our lives.

But sometimes, a unique person appears who is not like any other and changes our lives. Ms. Linda was that unique person for me! She was not only my teacher of English, but she also gave me many life lessons. She taught me self-confidence and to find greatness in the small things. And above all, she taught me always to see the bright side, even in the worst circumstances. She illuminated our lives, which is why I used to call her: "Ms. Sprinkles." I feel enormously privileged to have had Ms. Linda in my life.

Love, Nereida

In Memoriam: Debra Benn



Debra Benn passed in May after bravely battling cancer.

Her co-workers at Ulster Savings Bank remember her as outgoing, thoughtful, and a mother figure who was often seen offering advice and helping younger colleagues with their career goals. Everyone who spent time with Debra became a better person for it.

Aside from her work at the bank, Debra was an active community member, serving on the boards of several nonprofit organizations. She joined the Ulster Literacy Association (ULA) board in March 2022 and became its Secretary in January 2024. She also chaired the Development Committee, where she created onboarding methods for potential new board members.

Debra joined ULA to advocate for educational initiatives and to expand opportunities for reading and learning. Always the first to volunteer, she was an exemplary board member. Her sense of humor and infectious laughter brought joy to all around her. Debra's dedication and service as a board member are qualities we will strive to emulate.

Financial Information

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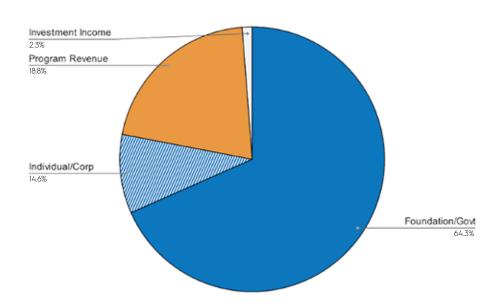
Total Revenue / Support	\$339,787
Investment Income / Returns	\$ 7,792
Program Revenue	\$ 63,712
Individual / Corporate Donations	\$ 49,724
Foundation / Government Grants	\$218,559

Expenses

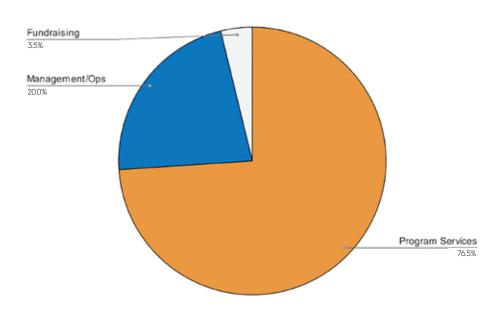
Program Services	\$250,818
Management / Operations	\$ 65,653
Fundraising	\$ 11,377

Total Expenses \$327,848

Revenue



Expenses



Our Supporters



























COUNTY BOOKSTORES PARTICIPATING IN ULSTER LITERACY DAY



















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The Golden Notebook Richard Goldman Mitchell & Susan Gordon Gunther/Klein Family Fund Half Moon Books Hannaford Community Bag Program H. Houst & Son, Inc. William & Regina Heffernan Antoine Hepkins Harriet Iles Marianne Kearney Kingston Kiwanis Club Bruce Levine Nora Licht Robert Mance Mary & Robert Netter Ann Patty Alla Pinsky Sarah Ryan Consuelo Santana Karen Sato Wendy Saul Michael Savre Toby Schulman Eileen Sweenv Lawraine Vallee Vision Excel Evecare

Sentence Level

Michelle Abt Evelyn Baer Debra Benn The Bicycle Rack Blue Heron Books NY Rena Blumenthal Darlene Bover Carolyn Brancato Fredda & Timothy Brennan Anna M. Brett David & June Cartmell George & Jane Conger Dena Crane James R. & Sheila M. Craven Joann Davton-Wolf Lynn & Bob Dennison Beverly Donofrio Denise Dudzic Sarah Elliott Michael Ferris Kate Fitzgerald & Sonnie Willson Joe Fitzpatrick & Kathleen Kluber Jennie W. Fleck Lynn Formica, in memory of Janis Leas Patricia Goodwin Raleigh Green Linda C. & Richard R. Gurqui David Hall Deborah & Richard Heppner Indigo Mist Books Ronnie Sue Jaffe Jam in Joint Ventures Inc

Rose Jambrone

Sentence Level cont'd

Tara Johannessen Robin Kahn Robert Kane Lucinda Knaus Amy Lenard Andrea Mannix JoAnn Margolis Una & Stewart Maurer William McKnight Elizabeth Miller Mirabai Books Debra Moskowitz & Elin Menzies John A. Mower Abby S. Newton Jovce D. & Robert L. Nicol Sandra & Matthew John Ostovich Our Bookshop Kristine Pedersen Amee & Warren Peterson Michael Petkov Nancy Piore Donald Pollock Barry Price Maxanne Resnick Heather Robinson Joan & William Roth Donna Rutlin Maude Salinger lleane Santana-Gilbert Saugerties Schools Retired Employees Assn Betty Schoen-Rene John Schrenk, Jr. Erin Schulman Gayle Schumacher David Smilow Catherine Snoddy Janet Solow Paul & Cynthia Sonnenbera Debra Spicehandler Valerie Sprenz Florence J. Staats Hilarie & Joe T. Staton Valorie & Vern Todd United Reformed Church of Rosendale Bethia Waterman Cari Weisberg Karen & Paul Wereszynski Dina L Wilcox World's End Comics Jack Young

Word Level

Barbara D. Arrindell Nelsie Aybar-Grau Stephen Bangert Catherine Benham Robin Berger Edith Bolt Pasquale A. & Rae F. Bottino Joanne Cecere Lorraine Cranston Linda Diamond Les Gerber Steven Greenfield Elizabeth Horn Nancy Jainchill, Ph.D. Jane Keller & Thomas Oliveri Anne Kelly Howard Leibovitch Julian Lines Virginia Lupino Olivia Mason Phyllis McCabe Gwen McCann Sarah Mecklem Marie Miller Andre Nacmanie Gaela Pearson Joseph & Sandra Perna Dennis & Abigail Reip Cornelia Rosenblum Judy Alexander Samoff Theresa Schiller Rich Silverman Myra Sorin Puja A. J. Thomson Carsten Warnes Frances Wilkinson

Thank You!

We are grateful for our donors whose generous support make our work possible, and to those who provided in-kind services totaling over \$10.000

Ulster Literacy Association

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Sabrina Joray Program Manager
Teresa Detweiler Volunteer Coordinator
Giuditta Tucci Outreach Coordinator

Margaret Delfino AmeriCorps VISTA Literacy Leader

Correction Education Staff

Joann Dayton-Wolf Correctional Education Program Coordinator

Andrea Harmon Art Instructor
Rich Silverman Writing Instructor
Margo McLoone Writing Instructor
Jane Quinn GED Instructor
Linda Smith GED Instructor
Volunteer Tutor

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