

# IMPACT REPORT



FISCAL YEAR  
**2022–2023**



**INDY READS**  
— INDIANAPOLIS, IN —  
**100% Literacy for All**

Our Mission

Our mission is to build the literacy, English language, and job readiness skills to empower adults and families to reach their full potential.

Our Vision

100% literacy for all.

Our Core Values



Student-Centered

We adapt our curriculum to meet the needs of individual students to ensure they can envision their own paths forward.



Innovative

Both forward-thinking and flexible, we model best practices in adult education and nonprofit management, aspiring to excellence in everything we do.



Inclusive

We create welcoming environments where students, volunteers, and supporters from diverse backgrounds gather.



Literacy

Our programs help people develop basic literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking, and comprehending) and apply them in all aspects of their lives.

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Indy Reads’ staff at our Inaugural Fundraising Breakfast, Wednesday April 26, 2023.

Letter from Our Chief Executive Officer



Looking back at this program year, I am in awe of the drive, purpose, and commitment reflected in Indy Reads’ impact. In a year of unique challenges and

changes, our core values were our guideposts. From supporting our nearly 300 adult learners in advancing their goals to reimagining our organizational model for sustainability as we serve—and are served by—our community, I am so pleased to reflect on how our mission came to life last year.

*Student-centeredness* anchors both what we do and how we do it. We strive to ensure that every student feels welcome and wanted in every aspect of our work, including our academic and family programming in our classrooms and community bookstore. We believe our programs are only as strong as our students’ involvement and have expanded the ways in which we actively seek and listen to student input.

We allow ourselves to continuously wonder what we can do better for our students and our community because we are *innovative*. Our oldest program, Literacy Foundations, operated on a one-to-one tutoring model for over 38 years. It serves the most beginning-level literacy learners who often fall behind in the adult education system. This year, we decided we can do better to facilitate community and success for our Literacy Foundations students as we piloted a classroom-based model for instruction. This course has made great strides and we look forward to seeing its growth next year.

Our *inclusivity* further resonates in all we do and in how we do it. In planning our first major

fundraising event in three years, we deliberately sought to welcome and engage community members across all socioeconomic, racial, and education levels. Attendees of our sold-out breakfast, *Unlocking Our Potential*, have said they were so moved by our three student speakers, who were proud and eager to share their stories. It all came together when one of our speakers, HSE graduate, Rebecca, paused in her remarks to admit her nervousness and received a cheer of encouragement from a new supporter.

*Literacy* is at the heart of it all. Every class offering, activity, and partnership that Indy Reads facilitates and fosters is designed to build and celebrate the literacy of all participants. In April, an ELL student and her young daughter joined our World Book Day event. By chance, she and I brought the same book, *Click Clack Moo*, to read in two different languages, Arabic and Spanish. This family-oriented celebration of the same story (about self-advocacy) encapsulates exactly this: the joy and power of literacy.

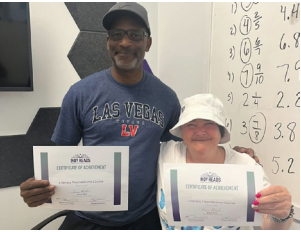
There is something very special in witnessing the growing confidence of every Indy Reads participant to read, write, and share their stories, talents, and expertise with all of us. This year, especially, our entire community stood unwavering in our values, determined to continuously ignite and evolve our mission and programs.

Sincere thanks to our Board of Directors, volunteers, staff, students, donors, and partners. Indy Reads is advancing social equity through education and building community. We can only do this together. Thank you!

**Ruba Marshood**  
Chief Executive Officer



Our Programs



Literacy Foundations

Literacy Foundations is designed to help the most beginning level native English-speaking students develop their basic reading and writing skills to achieve specific literacy goals. Indy Reads is the only adult education organization in Indiana that formally serves these students.

Pictured, L–R: Literacy Foundations students Ben B. and Pamela L.

Pathway to Literacy (ELL Literacy Foundations)

In partnership with the Immigrant Welcome Center, our ELL Literacy Foundations classes serve adults who strive to learn English and are at the most beginning literacy level in their native languages. This course is designed to support ELL students with six years or less of formal schooling.

Pictured, L-R: Instructor Cindy Reinhard laughing with Pathway to Literacy student Abraham W.



English Language Learning (ELL)

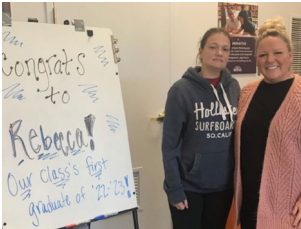
Our fastest growing program, ELL classes support adult learners at all levels of the English literacy spectrum as they develop their speaking, listening, reading, writing, and comprehension skills to unlock their economic and social potential.

Pictured, L–R: Staff member Chris Simmons, ELL student Elsmeni N., and staff member Daisy Velez Collazo

High School Equivalency (HSE)

Fourteen percent of Hoosier students did not graduate from high school in 2022. Our in-person and virtual HSE classes prepare students to earn their HSE diploma by covering all five subjects in the HiSET exam (reading, writing, math, social studies, and science).

Pictured, L–R: HSE graduate Rebecca S. with Instructor Anne Beal



Customer Service and Paraprofessional Certifications

Our industry-recognized Paraprofessional and Customer Service certifications help adults in Indiana stand out in today’s competitive job market. These programs provide preparation for qualifying exams and personalized support. Customer Service participants have the opportunity to complete a paid internship in our community bookstore.

Pictured: Customer Service Skills Program graduate Lay C. working at Indy Reads

Community Bookstore Programs

Indy Reads provides pay-what-you-can programming to adults and their families in our community bookstore and with partners throughout Indianapolis. Programs include author readings, family-oriented activities, multilingual events, and more. These programs provide our entire community with literary and literacy engagement.

Pictured: Big Chair Story Time every Friday at 10:30am at Indy Reads



Our Impact





Stories from Our Community



Katleeanna H. with her diploma.

"The High School Equivalency [HSE] teacher, Miss Anne, is amazing. She made me cry 'cause she was being really encouraging. I've never had that kind of encouragement from anyone. Feeling all of the love and encouragement that came with the environment at Indy Reads gave me the most motivation I feel like I ever had. If you want your HSE diploma, trust the process. It doesn't matter how long it takes. If you trust [the Indy Reads team], you're going to get through it with flying colors." — Katleeanna H., HSE graduate

"I love to read. Reading has always been there for me and I wanted to share that gift with other people. I went to a Volunteer Info Session and quickly realized that reading for fun was a profound privilege in itself. For our students, this is survival. And that's how I got hooked on Indy Reads! Once I saw the need, I don't know...I just couldn't ignore it anymore." — Jenny Anderson, HSE Classroom Volunteer



Jenny Anderson, HSE Classroom Volunteer.



Elsmani N. speaking at our Inaugural Fundraising Breakfast.

"When I was starting with Indy Reads, I could not complete a sentence correctly. But now, I have built my confidence in myself. Right now I am speaking in front of you. Nothing is coming easy. I have started to dream in English, now. All of my attention is on English." — Elsmeni N., ELL student

"It's exciting to have found my calling this late in life, but volunteering with Indy Reads is a calling! Having had to learn English myself, there are many moments I can point to that were 'aha moments' and I can share that with beginners. I remember the first time I went to the grocery store and I was looking for cream of tartar in the dairy department. There's a cultural relation in sharing with students things like that; I think it helps." — Maria Fritz, ELL Classroom Volunteer



L-R: Maria Fritz with Luz V., an ELL student.

Who we Serve

Top Countries of Origin

- 1. United States
- 2. Mexico
- 3. Venezuela
- 4. Honduras
- 5. Afghanistan

\*42 countries represented.

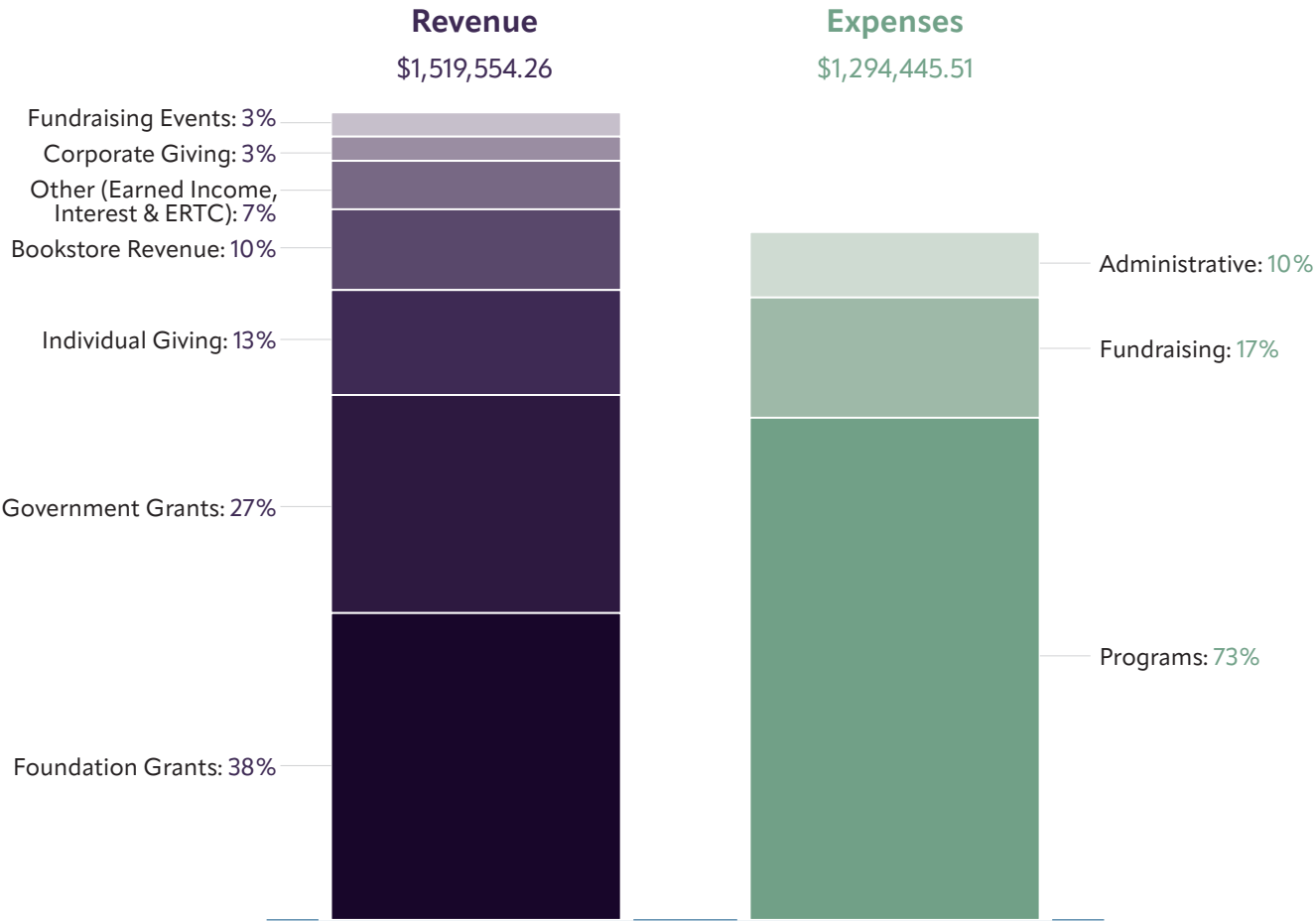
Top Student Languages

- 1. Spanish
- 2. English
- 3. Arabic
- 4. Pashto
- 5. Portuguese | Dari

\*41 languages represented.



Organization Financials





## A Year in Photos

July 17, 2022

### Helping Hands for Literacy

Volunteers distributed 632 books to Little Free Libraries throughout Indianapolis during four Helping Hands Days!



August 17, 2022

### An Evening with Ashley Flowers

Indy Reads celebrated Ashley Flowers' debut novel, *All Good People Here*, at the Indiana Repertory Theatre.



October 8, 2022

### Spooky Story Hour

The Black Hats Society of Irvington reads children's Halloween books to families at Indy Reads.



December 9, 2022

### Together, Indy Reads 2022

Volunteers, staff, and students helped with two direct mail efforts, raising more than \$120,000 to support literacy for all.

September 30, 2022

### Booth 17 Launch Party

*Booth*, a literary magazine published by Butler University's Creative Writing program, launches their 17th issue.



November 9, 2022

### An Evening with Chef Tanorria Askew

Tanorria Askew, local author, chef, and social justice activist, demonstrates recipes from her book, *Staples +5*.



February 24, 2023

### Poetry Night

A local poetry reading featuring Ashley Mack-Jackson (pictured), Korie "KP" Griggs, and Angela D. Barnes.



April 26, 2023

### Inaugural Fundraising Breakfast

Ruba Marshood delivering the keynote address at our Inaugural Fundraising Breakfast: Unlocking Our Potential.



June 10, 2023

### Pride Parade with Indiana Youth Group

Indy Reads staff members walking with Indiana Youth Group on Massachusetts Avenue for the 2023 Pride Parade.

January 15, 2023

### The Indy Reads Writing Series

Community members enjoying a family-friendly writing workshop series led by Sam Fain and Téa Franco.



March 29, 2023

### An Evening with Tamara Winfrey-Harris

Tamara Winfrey-Harris, Indiana Authors Award honoree, discusses her books, *Dear Black Girl* and *The Sisters are Alright*.



May 11, 2023

### End of the Academic Year

Students, staff, and volunteers celebrate their achievements at a class party at La Plaza.





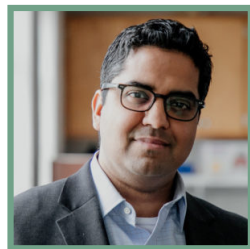
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*Visiting Clinical Faculty/Program Coordinator- Early Childhood Education*



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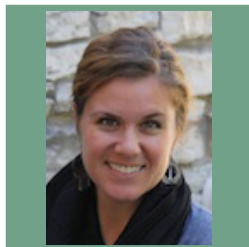
**Lindsay Gramlich**  
Girls Inc. of Greater Indianapolis  
*President & CEO*



**Lori Hall**  
Legacy Health Strategies  
*Senior Director, Health Literacy & Communications*



**Kenneth Magezi**  
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*Vice President, Credit Risk*



**Mariann McGee Bernlohr**  
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Eskenazi Health  
*Chief Clinical & Revenue Officer*

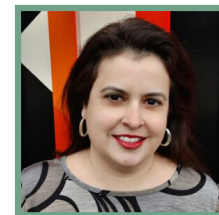


**William Turner, Jr.**  
Markle Foundation  
*Chief Program Officer*

# Our Staff



**Sarika Agarwal**  
Instructor



**Maria Thereza Bastos**  
Academic Operations Coordinator



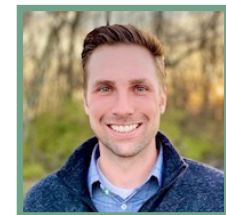
**Anne Beal**  
Instructor



**Christina Binhack**  
Vice President of Program



**Catherine Cardwell**  
Bookstore Program Director



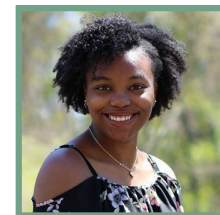
**Bryant Coffing**  
AmeriCorps Coordinator



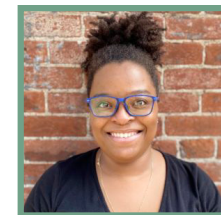
**Sam Ferrante**  
Development & Communications Coordinator



**Paul Finegan**  
Instructor



**Oceanik Garrett**  
Bookstore Program Coordinator



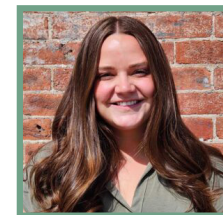
**Lydia Johnson**  
Vice President of Operations



**Ruba Marshood**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Jerome Mason**  
AmeriCorps WorkLiteracy Coach



**Jennie McDowell**  
Community Engagement & Volunteer Coordinator



**Trent Moore**  
Vice President of Community Impact



**Raquel Ravinet**  
Finance Manager



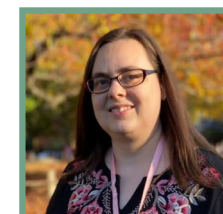
**Lauren Reed**  
Instructor



**Cindy Reinhard**  
Instructor



**Chris Simmons**  
Student Services Manager



**Erica Spohr**  
Instructor



**Toby Stark**  
Chief Development & Communications Officer



**Andrew Tanner**  
AmeriCorps WorkLiteracy Coach



**David Turner**  
Instructor



**Daisy Velez Collazo**  
Intake/ELL Coordinator



Our Donors

Literacy League

Our Literacy League members are donors who have pledged a monthly gift of \$5 or more to support Indy Reads. Their steady support is honored with a nameplate in our community bookstore, as well as a free used book each month. We are so grateful for our Literacy League!

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