Empower Women Through Literacy
Dear supporters and friends, thank you for helping make 2019 such a fantastic year in a most memorable way. Your compassion for adult literacy has helped programs overcome challenges and open doors of opportunities to learners worldwide. Your support is the driving force for the success of adult learners and our shared communities.

This year ProLiteracy is embarking on an exciting new partnership to make a lasting impact in the adult literacy field. With great pleasure we announce that ProLiteracy and Lancôme are working together to empower women and eradicate low literacy in the U.S.

In addition, ProLiteracy is the 2019 winner of the David M. Rubenstein Library of Congress Literacy Award. Our organization is being recognized for achieving outstanding and measurable contributions to increasing literacy levels worldwide.

In this issue we are also including a student’s story about persistence and achievement, as well as a couple of great stories about some of our very generous supporters.

Thank you for empowering adult learners, and I hope that you enjoy this issue of Voices.

Kevin Morgan
President and CEO
Lancôme and ProLiteracy Launch the Write Her Future Institute

LANCÔME USA has partnered with ProLiteracy to combat low literacy among women in the United States. Through this partnership, Lancôme USA has the power to transform the lives of thousands of women by increasing their literacy levels and giving them the opportunity to improve their lives and those of their families.

ProLiteracy and Lancôme worked together to develop the Write Her Future Institute to empower women through literacy. The Lancôme grant to ProLiteracy will provide free access to Voxy®, a personalized language learning platform that pairs authentic content with personalized live instruction—all delivered in a fully mobile experience. Adult literacy programs can apply for free one-year Voxy licenses at writeherfutureinstitute.com.

Through this exciting partnership, ProLiteracy and Lancôme foresee a world where women increase their literacy skills, get better jobs, improve their health, leave abusive relationships, break the cycle of poverty, learn English language skills, and support their families. We are excited about the important work that ProLiteracy and Lancôme can do together.

To launch the Write Her Future Institute, Lancôme presented a check to ProLiteracy in honor of their brand ambassador, actress and singer Zendaya, on September 4, 2019, at Macy’s Herald Square flagship store in New York City.
ProLiteracy Awarded Top Prize from the Library of Congress

**PROLITERACY** was selected as the recipient of the 2019 David M. Rubenstein Prize of the Library of Congress Literacy Awards Program. The Library of Congress Literacy Awards Program honors nonprofit organizations that greatly impact increasing literacy levels of individuals across the U.S. and around the world.

The David M. Rubenstein Prize of $150,000 is awarded to an organization based either inside or outside the United States and for an outstanding and measurable contribution to increasing literacy levels that has demonstrated exceptional and sustained depth in its commitment to the advancement of literacy. The awarded organization meets the highest standards of excellence in its operations and services.

The 2019 Library of Congress Literacy Awards were presented August 30 at the National Book Festival Gala in Washington, D.C. Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden and philanthropist David M. Rubenstein awarded the top prizes. “Literacy is the ticket to learning, opportunity, and empowerment on a global scale,” said Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden.

Through the Library of Congress Literacy Awards Program, recipients are encouraged to continue development and distribution of effective best practices and innovative methods that raise awareness of literacy. ProLiteracy is very grateful to be presented with the 2019 David M. Rubenstein Prize and will use it as a driving force to continue to promote literacy through content development, programs, and unique awareness campaigns. ●
It is Never Too Late to Earn a GED® Diploma

MY NAME IS KATHERINE BRYANT, and I am 64 years young, a mother of five, and a grandmother of 23. I left high school at the age of 17 to help care for my sick mother. And honestly, leaving was not a hard choice because I didn’t love school and there were plenty of jobs.

After my mom died, I got married, started a family, and got a job. I worked in day care, food services, and home health care. I left work at the Naval Hospital when my husband got sick. After I lost him, I worked at a day care center, but I lost that job and was not hired for another because I do not have a high school diploma.

I passed Southeast Ministry, an adult education program in Washington, D.C., for years and would say, “I’m going to get my GED.” It’s not that I didn’t have time, I was just afraid. I was afraid of how people would look at me, afraid to tackle the problem I have with math, and afraid that I just could not do it.

I could no longer ignore the fact that I needed a high school diploma, so I had to put my big girl pants on and face it. “I’ve got to get my GED!” But I still had this fear and doubt in me. In church, we are taught that God didn’t give us fear, nor did he give us doubt. So one day in February of 2018, I walked through the door at Southeast Ministry.

I could not have asked for better teachers. Ms. Savoy, my math teacher, teaches us how to use math every day in our lives. I can’t remember what my pretest score was when I started, but I know I have improved with math, based on the classwork and posttest score. She acted as if it was her score—since she was more excited than I was.

There are many people out here just like me who would love to receive their GED and get a job. I know that I will be walking across stage to receive my high school diploma very soon.

Southeast Ministry, an adult education program in Washington, D.C.
Donor Stories

Inspired by Her Parents to Support Adult Literacy

Caroline Palmer, Syracuse, NY

*Planned Gift Type: Charitable Gift Annuity*

Wallace Barkins, philanthropic planning officer for ProLiteracy, spoke with Caroline Palmer about philanthropy and planned giving. We thank Caroline for her generous gifts.

**WALLACE BARKINS:** Why did you want to make a planned gift to ProLiteracy?

**CAROLINE PALMER:** For many reasons. One is because reading is vitally important to life. Secondly, reading empowers people—if you don’t know how to read, you’re at the mercy of others. Also, reading is enjoyable, and people should be able to have that experience. Lastly, as a former second-grade teacher, I believe in the power of reading.

**WB:** Are there any particular ways in which you would like your planned gift to be used?

**CP:** Where it’s most needed.

**WB:** Is there anything you would like other philanthropists to know about you and your philanthropy?

**CP:** I strongly believe in ProLiteracy’s mission. I witnessed firsthand through my parents the importance of being able to read a newspaper, books, etc., because I saw it increase their knowledge and my own. My parents instilled this principle in me, as well as my nine siblings. The idea of not being able to read everyday sight words, a prescription bottle, a menu, or a bank statement, leaves one vulnerable. If this can be changed by my small contribution, I’m very pleased to know that I was able to make a difference.

**Reading empowers people—if you don’t know how to read, you’re at the mercy of others.**

—Caroline Palmer
At 99, Her Passion for Adult Literacy Continues

Thelma J. Kieffer

36 years of support to ProLiteracy

THELMA IS A LONG-TERM, DEDICATED SUPPORTER and partner with ProLiteracy who just celebrated her 99th birthday. She got her start in the adult literacy field many years ago as one of the founders of the Long Beach Literacy Council. The council started in her church, Grace United Methodist, in the 1970s after a visit from Dr. Frank Laubach. At this visit, Dr. Frank shared the Each One Teach One method that he used in the Philippines; it was warmly received and embraced. At the council, she served on the board of directors and also volunteered as a basic literacy tutor.

I admire adults that have the resolve to change their lives, given the harsh challenges of being an adult learner in today’s society.

One of Thelma’s concerns is the difficulty of learning as an adult, especially as it relates to being older, raising a family, and in many cases, being a woman. As a believer in and a champion of the power of literacy, she says that empowering women to read and to comprehend what they’re reading enhances their lives in a major way.

She admires adults that have the resolve to change their lives, given the harsh challenges of being an adult learner in today’s society. We are very grateful for Thelma’s continuing support, and we thank her for considering future adult learners by naming ProLiteracy in her estate plans.
FIND MORE WAYS TO GIVE AT PROLITERACY.ORG

PROLITERACY BELIEVES every adult has a right to literacy. We champion the power of literacy to improve the lives of adults, families, and communities. We envision a world in which everyone can read, write, and use technology to lead healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives. We can’t do it alone!

Thank you for your continued commitment to changing lives and communities through the power of adult literacy!

LEAVE YOUR LEGACY with ProLiteracy. Planned giving gives you the peace of mind to know that your future is planned and gives ProLiteracy the resources to plan for the future. Contact Wallace Barkins at wbarkins@proliteracy.org to find out how.

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Make a one-time donation or set up a recurring gift using our fast and secure online form. To donate, visit proliteracy.org/donate.

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