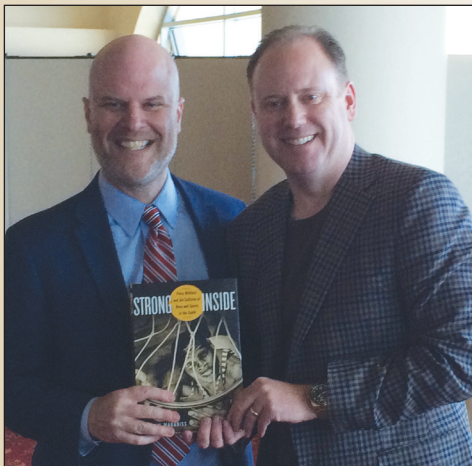




Strong Inside

Celebration Captures the Spirit of Determination

The path to self-improvement is not for the faint-hearted. It takes grit and determination to see it through and continue to better yourself. The 2016 Celebration of Literacy, a biennial event celebrating literacy achievements of individuals and organizations, honored a number of these remarkable people who took the chance and decided to change their lives. Greg Gard, UW–Men’s Basketball coach, emceed the event, while Andrew Maraniss, the keynote speaker and author of *Strong Inside: Perry Wallace and the Collision of Sports and Race in the South*, shared Wallace’s story and challenges as the first black basketball player in the South Eastern Conference. His story and those of award recipients



Andrew Maraniss (left) and Greg Gard

inspire and show a spirit of determination. Marisa Santiago didn’t believe education was important when she was young. She dropped out of high school to help support her mother and three younger siblings. When the Cargill Milwaukee factory, where she worked, closed, her world was turned upside down. Her TAA caseworker pointed her in the direction of the Milwaukee Achiever Literacy Services’ 5.09 HSED program. She quickly became the class leader, setting up study groups to help other learners. Marisa says, “Education for me is addicting. The 5.09 program taught me not to stop with my HSED.” She is now enrolled in the Milwaukee Area Technical College and getting her Associate Degree in Human Resources.

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Marisa Santiago didn’t believe education was important when she was young. She dropped out of high school to help support her mother and

At age 19, Tanisha Schmoeckel came to Central Wisconsin Literacy Council searching for help with her self-diagnosed reading problem. Even though reading and writing did not come easily to her, she began working two hours weekly to improve those skills. Her motivation and commitment to self-improvement eventually led her to enroll in the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Program at Mid-State Technical College. Tanisha never wavered and in December 2014 she completed the CNA coursework and passed the state test for certification and earned the Memory Care certification.



Marisa Santiago (left) and Tammy Schmoeckel



Esteban Cruz

Esteban Cruz struggled to read and write in his native language, Spanish. In March 2009, he began at Racine Literacy Council to take on speaking, reading, and writing in English. Esteban worked extremely hard for six years at Racine Literacy Council and achieved many of his goals, including reading to his children and helping them with their homework, attending parent/teacher conferences and visiting the doctor

continued on page 2

continued from page 1

without the help of an interpreter. He also made big gains in the workplace as his English skills improved. His employers now go to him for his input on how to improve the workplace.

Although each of their stories and struggles is unique, the award recipients all show courage, determination, and inner strength to improve themselves and their circumstances. Their perseverance inspires those around them.

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2016 Celebration of Literacy Award Recipients

OUTSTANDING ADULT LITERACY LEARNER OF THE YEAR
Tanisha Schmoeckel
Central Wisconsin Literacy Council

OUTSTANDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER OF THE YEAR
Esteban Cruz
Racine Literacy Council

OUTSTANDING LEARNER ON A CAREER PATHWAY
Marisa Santiago
Milwaukee Achiever Literacy Services

COURAGE AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN A CORRECTIONAL SETTING
Martez Green
Racine Correctional Institution

JESSICA DOYLE FAMILY LITERACY AWARD
Milwaukee Achiever Literacy Services and Milwaukee Public Schools

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN A WORKPLACE LITERACY PROGRAM
Greater Waukesha Literacy
Dickten Masch Plastics

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN HEALTH LITERACY (TIE)
Winnebago County Literacy Council
Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation

TUTOR OF THE YEAR
John Mathis
Children's Dyslexia Center - Madison

LITERACY ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR
Janice Lee
Coulee Region Literacy Council

Wisconsin Literacy: Providing a Supportive, Statewide Voice for Literacy

An Interview with New Board Chair Greg Simmons, President/CEO of MetaStar, Inc.

What do you think is the most important contribution from community-based literacy programs in our state?

Our mission and vision at Wisconsin Literacy (WL) is that everybody in Wisconsin achieve the literacy skills they need to reach their full potential. That happens through the support and statewide voice that we provide for all the local agencies. The local agencies are the boots on the ground, the ones on the front lines, doing that work -- literacy being so important to helping people accomplish what they want to achieve in life.

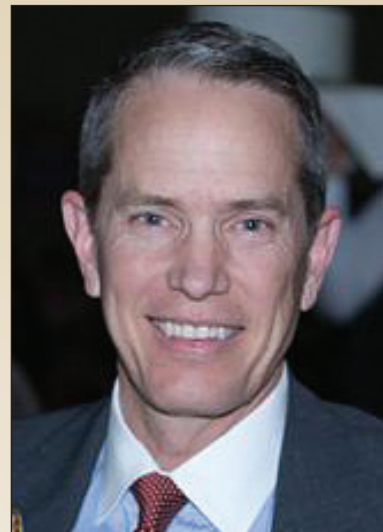
What are the greatest challenges facing these programs?

Funding is always an issue. There are lots of non-profits out there these days – thousands of them – all doing good work and necessary work, so finding the people who are really attached to our mission and want to support it financially is a challenge. I think the other challenge is low literacy, especially among adults, is not well understood in society in general. It is something that tends to be hidden. So getting information out to the general public about the size and the depth of the problem is also a challenge.

The fact that Wisconsin Literacy provides support to those agencies, a statewide voice both at the Capitol and elsewhere, is really important. WL also provides a statewide voice with the technical college system and workforce partners. We provide the glue that keeps everyone together and moving forward.

Tell us a little bit about yourself and what you bring as the chair of the Wisconsin Literacy Board.

I've been the CEO of MetaStar for 29 years and been in healthcare about 40 years. I bring a lot of experience with non-profit governance having been on a number of non-profit boards. I also bring an attachment to Wisconsin Literacy's mission, not only its health literacy mission but also its broader mission to help support adult and family literacy agencies around the state.



Where do you see Wisconsin Literacy in the next 5 years?

We're looking to add value for our members and form programs that will help them realize their goals in terms of workforce development and their own local health literacy efforts. If anything, there is going to be more need for adult literacy services than there has been in the past. Our health literacy division has really grown substantially and will continue to grow. Now, we're one of the premiere statewide agencies in the nation working in the area of health literacy.

SAVE THE DATE

2017 Wisconsin Health Literacy Summit

Health Literacy: A Critical Link in Patient Engagement

April 4-5, 2017

Monona Terrace Community and Conference Center
Medication Label Summit April 3



Wisconsin Health Literacy Briefs



HOW TO EFFECTIVELY USE HEALTH CARE

More Wisconsin residents will soon have access to materials and programs on how to effectively use the health care system and health insurance. These resources were developed over the last two years in a pilot program limited to selected counties. The project was coordinated by Wisconsin Health Literacy and Covering Wisconsin, through funding from the Wisconsin Health Information Organization (WHIO). It was announced this month that WHIO has agreed to continue funding for statewide expansion over the next two years.

This expansion builds on the just-completed Phase I project funded by WHIO which included 20 “Better Health Care for Better Health” workshops. Many of these were offered to adult learners through Wisconsin Literacy member agencies. In Phase II, WHL will be offering additional workshops through health providers and insurers, as well as through community agencies. These workshops include topics such as

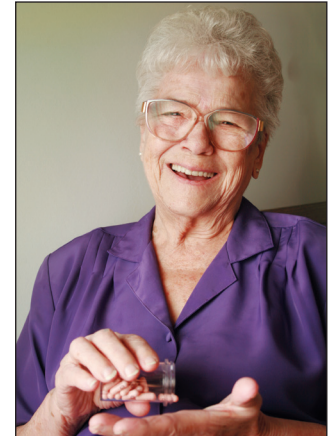
- Understanding confusing terms: “provider”, “PCP”
- Why it’s important to have a primary care provider
- When to go to the primary care doctor vs. the Emergency Department
- Evaluating the quality of health care
- Preparing for a doctor’s visit

Also part of the expanded project are health literacy assessments for selected providers and insurers interested in demonstrating their commitment to health literacy.

If your organization is interested in learning how you could be involved, please contact Kari LaScala, kari@wisconsinliteracy.org.

IMPROVING ALZHEIMER’S CARE THROUGH HEALTH LITERACY

A new two-year project, funded by Badger Philanthropies, involves preparation of 1,000 toolkits on how to use health literacy principles to enhance care for those with early Alzheimer’s or other dementias. These toolkits will be provided to caregivers, health care workers, health educators, case workers and personal care representatives, along with direct training to 20 organizations on how to use the toolkits.



WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR CHILD GETS SICK?

Wisconsin Health Literacy (WHL) continues to educate the community and work to improve health literacy in Wisconsin through its efforts to distribute *What to Do When Your Child Gets Sick* books through Reach Out and Read clinics. Under a new Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation grant, WHL is partnering with four clinics in the Milwaukee, Manitowoc and Beloit areas. Additionally, it is expanding its partnership with Security Health Plan to distribute the book to additional clinics in northwest Wisconsin.



Advocacy Efforts Result in Funding for GED\Literacy Services at Member Agencies



Through advocacy efforts aimed at informing our state legislators of the important work being done at WL member agencies, Wisconsin Literacy was awarded funding through the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to enhance and enable GED completion rates and general literacy services. Much of the funding is aimed at helping our established GED programs focus on increasing GED/HSED services and adult students completing the General Educational Development certificate. Wisconsin Literacy is specifically targeting W-2 clients (Wisconsin Works) who are TANF-eligible (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) and looking to gain their GED and find or improve employment. Our member agencies are connecting with W-2 provider agencies to encourage more adults to work on obtaining this important credential.

“Our members do incredible life-changing work with adults wanting to improve their circumstances. Having GED instruction delivered in small group settings or through one-to-one tutoring sessions can give those who have struggled in traditional classroom settings the confidence and attention they need to succeed,” said Michele Erikson, WL executive director. Wisconsin Literacy members can check with their regional literacy consultant for more information about this funding.

Wisconsin Literacy Welcomes New Staff Members



**ANNA BIERER, NE
REGIONAL CONSULTANT**

Anna’s entire professional career has focused on adult and family literacy. Her experiences include tutoring adults in literacy and numeracy, teaching English to adult refugees, managing family literacy programs, and facilitating partnerships with private, public and nonprofit sectors.



**DAN PLUMMER, FUND
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**

Dan has worked professionally for philanthropic causes since 2005. While he has a depth of responsibilities that have ranged from organizational management to outreach programming, his true passion is raising funds for causes in which he believes - thus bringing him to Wisconsin Literacy.



LIZ FITZPATRICK, MEMBER SERVICES COORDINATOR

Liz previously worked for the non-profit Community Shares of Wisconsin managing their donor database along with maintaining website updates and e-communications. Her enthusiasm and communication know-how will make her a great asset to Wisconsin Literacy.



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2016 Celebration of Literacy

