



2024 Literacy Champions

For More Information:

Ethan Gormley, Literacy Coalition Coordinator
egormley@cortlandareactc.org
(518) 250-8983

Book Van-Go - Keys to Kindergarten

Keys to Kindergarten is a new summer program for children entering kindergarten in the North Syracuse Central School District. Book Van-Go will provide weekly storytime during June, July, and August along with free books to families. The final Literacy Celebration will provide children with a brand-new book, titled *I Am a Great Friend*. The program will introduce families to Book Van-Go and their free resources, including unlimited books, park visits, and upcoming family events.

Building Men Program - Let's Go and Read On!

The Building Men Program understands the importance of literacy and utilizes its position in the Syracuse City schools to encourage and inspire young boys in Syracuse to read. In years past, "Book Breaks" were regular segments of the Build Men after school programs and Summer Institute Sports Camp. Let's Go and Read On! will provide booksets for the afterschool program. The program will supply books for the boys to own and read independently, as well as kickstart the spring reading challenge. It will challenge the boys to increase their daily reading during the spring and Summer Institute Sports Camp.

Center of Hope International, Inc. - Summer Readers' Theater Camp

The SRTC is a reading program that combines reading practice and performing arts. It blends middle school-aged students' desire to perform with their need for oral reading practice. It enhances students' reading skills and confidence, improves fluency, comprehension, and gives them opportunities to practice communication and speaking skills.



Edward Smith PTO - A Book for Every Student

Through the program, PTO volunteers create the book fair experience for every Ed Smith student. Twice per year, PTO volunteers invite every student to choose a new, high-interest book at no cost to them. Student choice and student interest drive the book selections. The program is expanding with three mobile books carts and the purchase of books for the youngest English Language Learners.

Friends of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo - Tadpole Academy

Tadpole Academy is a series of programs aligned with the NYS Common Core Learning Standards that create real-life connections to the world of reading for children in pre-k through first grade. Activities include reading aloud, tactile exploration of biofacts, and opportunities to use robotics and coding to improve literacy using Bee Bots. The focus is on Kindergarten readiness and increasing children's literacy via sustained experiences with exciting, tangible connections to the world of reading. The program is expanding to serve 2- to 5-year-olds in another school.

Keepers Connections, Inc. - Early Steps

Keepers Connections continues to serve newly arrived refugee populations in Onondaga County by holding a fun-filled learning opportunity to ease the transition to the American school system. The activities will include arts and crafts, read-alouds, sing-alongs, and storytime with puppet making. The project develops cultural adjustment and training for parents to take responsibility for their child's learning and development, while also promoting an understanding of the American school system and the importance of kindergarten readiness for their children.

Light A Candle For Literacy - Parade & Festival

The Light A Candle For Literacy Children's Book Festival & Parade, held annually in September, is a vibrant celebration dedicated to promoting childhood literacy. With a colorful parade kicking off the festivities, families gather to enjoy a day filled with free books, giveaways, and engaging literacy activities. From captivating storytelling sessions to author book signings, the festival creates a lively atmosphere that ignites a love for reading in children. Community organization booths also offer valuable resources, fostering a community-wide commitment to supporting young readers.

Liverpool Public Library - Reading Buddies

Reading Buddies is an initiative in partnership with the Liverpool Central School District. Teens are selected from the CTE (Career & Technical Education) Early Education Program to work one-on-one with children who are struggling with reading skills. Teens meet each child for 40 minutes, twice a week, for 3 weeks. During that time, teens help the children practice reading, play phonics-based games, and help the children choose books to take home and read. In addition to aiding children who received extra reading help, this program gives the CTE students experience in their field of interest and job training.



Onondaga Community College Foundation - Reading Good (Books)...Looking Good: Youth Literacy via STEM Career Awareness

Reading Good...Looking Good is a new literacy and career awareness project for youth and families that will capitalize on the trust that barbers and hairstylists have in the community to promote literacy and encourage interest in STEAM careers. The project will launch with an event featuring local barbers and hairstylists who will offer free haircuts and simple hair braiding for youth ages 7 to 12. The children will be encouraged to read one of several pre-selected books related to STEAM careers or read a book to a younger child. Coloring books featuring STEAM careers will be available for children under age 7. Micron Technology will join the event with virtual reality headsets to provide youth and parents with a glimpse of the high-technology process of semiconductor chip manufacturing. At the end of the event, barbers and hairstylists will take the books to their barbershops and hair salons to continue encouraging youth to read; and OCC, Syracuse Community Connections, and other partners volunteering at the event will engage in follow-up volunteer projects.

Onondaga County Public Library - Early Literacy Support at City Branch Libraries: Aligning Library Collections with the Science of Reading

The Onondaga County Public Library will purchase early-literacy decodable books and provide training for library staff so that they are confident in their efforts to help families choose the best materials to support their children's early reading needs. OCPL will keep city public library staff up to date on the latest research about how children learn to read and will also ensure library collections align with current research and best practices.

Partners in Learning, Inc. - Literacy for Emergent Bilingual Children & Adults

Partners in Learning, Inc. (PIL) aims to replicate its summer 2023 delivery of literacy programming in tandem with its 2024 summer MANOS program. PIL also aims to develop and implement an enhanced literacy component to its Diversity in Early Education & Care (DEEC) Program to facilitate improved English language literacy skills for participating emergent bilingual adults. Many of the participants are also parents of emergent bilingual children.

PGR Foundation, Inc. - PGR's International Youth Virtual Book Club

PGR will implement a four-month Youth International Virtual Book Club that promotes cross-cultural education through literacy and art that will enable participants ages 8 to 13 years old (City of Syracuse and Accra, Ghana) to competently interact with people from other cultures and live comfortably among people who share different cultures with appreciation and understanding.

Preserve the Black Child - Book Fair

The book fair includes 10-20 diverse children's book authors. The authors will display their work and enlighten parents and children about their books. Children will receive free signed copies and a free bookshelf, provided by Operation Northern Comfort.



Refugee and Immigrant Self-Empowerment (RISE) - RISE Workplace Voices

RISE Workplace Voices will send a professional English as a New Language instructor into a partner business that employs refugee and immigrant staff to conduct ENL classes in the workplace. Students will have a chance to grow their survival language skills while being paid by their employer without giving up the chance at a career. Employees may be working within potentially hazardous factory settings where the ability to communicate clearly can make the difference between safety and injury.

Rise Above Poverty - 2024 Fall Reading Clinic

The Rise Above Poverty Reading Clinic is designed to provide free literacy support for SCSD third- to sixth-graders with critically low reading proficiencies. The primary activities of the clinic include providing individualized instruction at student-centered learning stations, independent and paired reading, analyzing assessments, working on phonics and word recognition, and experiencing a book through a read-aloud.

Salina Library - Exploring Languages and Supporting English Learners

The Salina Library will host a series of language and cultural programs for children, featuring native speakers from various parts of the world. The library will also expand its language-learning resources to better assist families who are learning English as well as students interested in learning other new languages. These resources will be multimedia, including books, translation devices, audiobooks, and games. Through the combination of these programs and resources, the Salina Library looks to help welcome new immigrants to the community and foster understanding between cultures.

The Learning Place - Computers

The mission of the Learning Place is to enable adults and older youth to acquire listening, speaking, reading, writing, mathematics and technology skills needed to solve problems they encounter in daily life. The Learning Place will purchase new computers and software for its students with the Champions Grant funding.

United Way of Central New York - Book Buddies Summer BLAST (Bridging Literacy Achievement in Summer Time)

Book Buddies is a collaboration between the United Way of Central New York and the Syracuse City School District. The Book Buddies program recruits community volunteers to work one-on-one with students in kindergarten through third grade in the SCSD to increase student reading abilities and fluency. Book Buddies will offer two four-week summer programs, called Book Buddies Summer BLAST (Building Literacy All Summer Together). Each Book Buddies Summer BLAST school site will serve 40 students for a total of 80 students served during the summer school program.



YMCA of Central New York - Power Scholars Academy

Power Scholars Academy is a five-week summer learning program operated in partnership with BellXcel and Syracuse City Parks and Recreation. Built on BellXcel's evidence-based model, PSA addresses summer learning loss for scholars in grades 2-5, living in under-resourced and historically marginalized communities. The program will expand to a third Syracuse City Park in summer 2024.