

A Message from the Executive Director

Becoming Stronger – A Year of Achievement and New Opportunities

This year’s annual report is a reflection of our achievements over the previous year. It is also a celebration of our ability to remain strong during this difficult COVID-19 period.

We emerged from the pandemic and returned to in-person tutoring services and re-opened satellite tutoring sites. We also continued the many improvements that we implemented during the pandemic, making Chatham Literacy a better community partner. For example, we now provide:

- 📖 distance learning as a service delivery option,
- 📖 a combined option of in-person and distance learning,
- 📖 virtual tutor training with in-person options to meet individual needs,
- 📖 in-service training and support to our tutors through our Zoom platform,
- 📖 mini educational webinars for our learners through Facebook live stream.

During the past year we developed a three-year strategic plan to provide direction through 2025. Our board of directors and staff engaged in in-depth work regarding diversity, equity and inclusion. As we move

forward, we are committed to maintaining cultural awareness and being deliberately inclusive in everything we do.

We also gave significant attention to the evaluation of our programs, improving data collection and tracking methods and the analysis of our services, making modifications that support best practice. One such modification was the addition of a financial literacy pilot program that will kick-off this fall.

Although we can’t predict what the future may bring, we are confident in our ability to adapt to the needs of our learners and the needs of our community.

I ask that you help us tell our story by sharing this report with your friends and neighbors. We are so thankful to our donors and to those who give their time in support of our students.

Thank you very much for your continued support and for that of our volunteer tutors and other volunteers. They are the heart of our program and without them we could not exist.

With your continued help, we will continue to grow stronger together!

– **Vicki Newell, Executive Director**



Chatham Literacy Staff Front left to right: Leslie Ocampo, Joselyn Villaseñor, Loyda Estrada; Back left to right: Vicki Newell, Janine Brignola and DJ Lynch. Photo by Bill Horner III

Our Mission

Chatham Literacy helps adults, living or working in Chatham County, N.C., acquire the literacy and educational skills they need to function successfully in society.

Our Vision

Chatham County will be a community where everyone is literate.

Our Values

- Community • Cultural Competence
- Excellence • Focus on Students
- Sustainability • Our Colleagues

Classes at Farmers Alliance Building Making a Difference

After starting work for the Hispanic Liaison, Elena Gonzalez, a dedicated Latina leader, decided she wanted to improve her English skills and contacted Chatham Literacy.

Elena said that Chatham Literacy had three advantages that made her want to participate. She cited the quality of our program, the possibility to study at a time that suited her schedule, and a convenient tutoring location.

Elena participates in the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) class at

the Farmers Alliance building in downtown Siler City. She appreciates that it is a comfortable space that invites learning and is close to her office.

She also praises her tutor – Patricia Poe. “Patricia is a creative, caring and patient teacher who motivates me to learn and grow,” Elena explained. “I am elated to be improving my English and I am grateful to Chatham Literacy for giving me this opportunity.”



Elena and Patricia at the Farmers Alliance.



Aidee and B standing in front of Aidee's artwork, hanging in the Chatham Literacy office.

Meet Aidee Orozco, an Inspiring Adult Learner.

Aidee Orozco is currently enrolled with Chatham Literacy in the ESOL program. She is an excellent student and is progressing quickly. As a result, Aidee's confidence also improved, allowing her to excel at her other life passions.

She is highly accomplished. A wife and mother of two, an artist, and a baker, Aidee embraces her many talents while giving back to her Siler City community. She is known for her paintings, as well as her highly crafted Mexican gelatins and cookies that she bakes for family and friends.

Aidee and her husband previously owned a restaurant in Siler City. Her current goal

is to improve her English so she can better market her artwork.

She is also considering creating a retail clothing business, importing between Mexico and the US.

As a part of volunteerism, she is planning to paint murals for the Chatham Animal Resource Center in Pittsboro.

An advocate for women, Aidee explained, “It is about where women are going in the future, and how they will get there. I can show that in spite of a busy life with many detours, nothing is out of reach for me.”

A Proud New Citizen



Enrique just after being sworn-in as a U.S. citizen.

Enrique Rojas met his wife, an American, in Mexico. They fell in love, married, and moved to New York in 2001.

Today, they live in Chatham County and both are employed in the Chatham County school system. They lead busy lives and care for their three children. On March 28, 2022, Enrique became a U.S. citizen!

"It was a long road," Enrique recalled. "It took me 20 years to apply. But I love this country. I wanted to do the right thing. I was ready to take the next step."

Enrique enrolled with Chatham Literacy in 2021 to prepare himself for the U.S. citizenship test and interview.

"I was lucky to be paired up with an amazing tutor," explained Enrique. "Adrienne Lallo helped me so much and was so dedicated. She made all the difference in the world."

Enrique also was assisted by an additional Chatham Literacy tutor, Debbi Carter. She conducted mock interviews to help Enrique get comfortable with the process. He excelled in his studies and passed the test and interview with flying colors.

Enrique's citizenship swearing-in process was bittersweet. Typically, friends and family attend, but with COVID-19, he was alone. His wife even had to wait in the car. "I understood," Enrique recalled. "We celebrated at a restaurant afterward."

Amanda (Enrique's wife), a very busy classroom teacher at Siler City Elementary and mother of three, was so impressed by Chatham Literacy that she has signed up to be a tutor. "She wanted to help others like I was helped," Enrique explained. "My wife always inspired me to be the best I could be. Maybe she can now inspire others as well!"

Partners on the Learning Trail

Tutor Debbi Carter says she is "in awe" of the three students in her introductory ESOL class at Nature Trail, a mobile home community of mostly Latinx families. "They are so committed and excited about learning!"

This class is part of a pilot program which takes the long-term Chatham Literacy – Learning Trail working relationship to the next level.

The Learning Trail is a volunteer-led nonprofit born 15 years ago to provide free programs to Nature Trail residents. These programs offer early childhood education, after-school tutoring, enrichment activities and parent education.

Last year, Learning Trail President Kathleen Browning, asked the parents of the

children they serve how The Learning Trail could better serve them – what else did they need to support and encourage their children's academic success?

The answer: English classes! Kathleen reached out to Chatham Literacy, and we partnered to provide English instruction to nine parents. The Learning Trail provides classroom space, childcare and snacks. Chatham Literacy provides trained tutors and free learning materials.

All involved – staff, tutors and students – are equally committed to growing this program. What's next? Current adult students want to continue learning English; while even more parents eagerly wait to begin!



Tutors Debbi Carter (far left) and Lynette Tempest (far right) with some of their students.



Tutor Lily Brabbe (far left) with her financial literacy class.

Becoming Money Smart – Addressing Financial Literacy

In Chatham County, 18% of the residents are spending more than their income and 16% of households are underbanked, using alternate financial services such as check cashing services. That's why Chatham Literacy is adding financial literacy to the community services we offer.

Chair of this pilot project, Kurt Liberatore, said Chatham Literacy recognizes financial literacy's importance to the community. "It touches nearly every aspect of a person's life," said Liberatore. "It will prepare them to face the hurdles along the way toward financial well-being."

This pilot project focuses on building relationships with other organizations to identify potential students.

We are partnering with the FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) to use their Money Smart curriculum which provides a broad base of financial topics and is

adaptable to learners' needs. We are also part of the Money Smart Alliance, a group of over 1,400 member organizations that share information and best practices for teaching the curriculum. In our community, we are partnering with Head Start and Second Bloom of Chatham County to identify potential students.

Financial literacy pilot classes will be taught at Head Start's facility in Siler City this fall.

Kit Gruelle, Program Director for Second Bloom said, "Learning how to manage money will provide financial stability and contribute to the independence of the women we serve."

Chatham Literacy will continue building relationships with additional community partners to meet the financial literacy needs of Chatham County residents.

The Year in Numbers

149

adults served

10

became U.S. citizens

70%

received instructional hours

41

tutors volunteered

53%

received a combination of in-person instruction & distance learning

3,000

instructional hours

55%

met one or more service goals

7,200

total volunteer hours

An equivalent value of

\$216,000



**2022/21 Fiscal Year Expenditures:
\$260,561**

**84¢ of every dollar
went directly toward services.**

Thanks To Our Sponsors: July 2021 – June 2022

2021 Fall for Literacy Luncheon, featuring Cassandra King Conroy

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2022 Spring for Literacy Luncheon, featuring John Rosenthal

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Media Sponsor:

Chatham Magazine



Chatham Literacy staff and Event Committee Members take a photo moment with author John Rosenthal (center).

Take Action: Donate Today!

Thanks to your generosity, Chatham Literacy is transforming lives through literacy. There are many ways you can continue to help.

- Make a financial gift, online or by mail.
- Become a sustainer with regular monthly donations through your credit or debit card.
- Do you have highly appreciated stock? We are now accepting charitable stock donations! This could allow you to avoid taxes on gains while also helping out Chatham Literacy.

- Are you currently taking required minimum distributions (RMD) from your IRA/401K? Consider making a qualified charitable distribution to Chatham Literacy! This could be a tax-efficient way to donate!
- Include Chatham Literacy in your planned giving.
- Shop for literacy online through AmazonSmile.com or iGive.com.
- Donate your time as a tutor through either in-person or distance learning.
- Become engaged as a Board Director or committee member.



Attendees at the 2021 Fall for Literacy Luncheon.

2021-22 Board of Directors

Linda Nalty, Chair; Maliinda Marsh, Vice Chair; Tim White, Treasurer; Pam Naugle, Secretary

Kelly Clark Boldt, Tom Craig, Alirio Estevez, Daniel Haithcox, Mary Harris, Kurt Liberatore, Ed McCraw, Jim Nass, Susan Newell, Jason Reed, Audrey Schwankl

Chatham Literacy Committee Members

Beth Anderson, Maureen Avakian, Scott Cabe, B Demers, Drew Drain, Heather Johnson, Cyndi Harris, Larry Hicks, Teresa Keefner, Chris Kehrer, Dennis Nalty, Ed Neely, Liza Terll, Eric Williams

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Tutors, students and staff celebrate International Women's Day.

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 Patricia Grebe
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 Joe Hackney*
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 Daniel Haithcox
 Diana Hales*
 Jennie Harris*
 Mary Harris*
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 Laura Heise*
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Tutor B Demers and Vicki Newell share about Chatham Literacy at the Pittsboro Street Fair....scary!

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* indicates 3+ years of giving

*A special thanks to Lacey Springs
 Designs for designing this report!*



Chatham Literacy hosted a 'Relaxation Station' at Clydefest. Children's author Dolly Sickles (center) joined our efforts.



Chatham Literacy awareness booth at the Chicken Festival in Siler City.

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Chatham Literacy is a United Way of Chatham County member agency and encourages participation in the current annual campaign.