

\* see pg. 16 for One World Education

# LITERACY AWARDS

**LIBRARY  
OF CONGRESS**

# 2019



# A MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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*“Literacy is the ticket to learning, opportunity and empowerment on a global scale.”*

Carla Hayden, Librarian of Congress

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The Library of Congress is the largest library in the world, with millions of books, recordings, photographs, newspapers, maps, manuscripts and more in its collections. The Library’s mission is to engage, inspire and inform Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity. Yet, how can we fully succeed in this mission if even a portion of the audiences we serve face literacy challenges?

Through the generosity of philanthropist David M. Rubenstein, the Library of Congress Literacy Awards Program recognizes the importance of literacy by honoring nonprofit organizations that have made outstanding contributions to increasing literacy in the United States and abroad, and by bringing literacy professionals together to share and disseminate the most effective practices. By recognizing exemplary organizations and creating an opportunity for discussion, we provide practical ways for literacy organizations to increase their reach and the impact of their efforts.

Since 2013, the Library of Congress Literacy Awards Program has awarded \$1.9 million in prizes to 120 institutions in 35 countries. This recognition began with each organization applying for consideration. Their applications were read by a distinguished advisory board and scored for innovation, sustainability, replicability, measurable results and evidence-based practice. The advisory board presented recommendations to the Librarian of Congress, who made the final selections.

**The Library of Congress Literacy Awards include:**

The **David M. Rubenstein Prize (\$150,000)**, awarded to an organization that has made outstanding and measurable contribution to increasing literacy levels and has demonstrated exceptional and sustained depth and breadth in its commitment to the advancement of literacy. The organization meets the highest standards of excellence in its operations and services. This award may be given to an organization based either inside or outside the United States.

The **American Prize (\$50,000)**, awarded to an organization that has made a significant and measurable contribution to increasing literacy levels in the United States or the national awareness of the importance of literacy. This award may be given to an organization that is based in the United States.

The **International Prize (\$50,000)**, awarded to an organization or national entity that has made a significant and measurable contribution to increasing literacy levels in a country other than the United States. This award may be given to an organization based either inside or outside the United States.

In addition to the three major awards, the Library of Congress recognizes up to 15 organizations as **Best Practices Honorees** and awards them \$5,000 each.

The Library of Congress thanks the members of the Literacy Awards Program Advisory Board for their sustained commitment of time and expertise to this worthy endeavor and to David Rubenstein for his generous support of the awards. We hope the summaries of the winning organizations included in this booklet will inspire further exploration and collaboration.

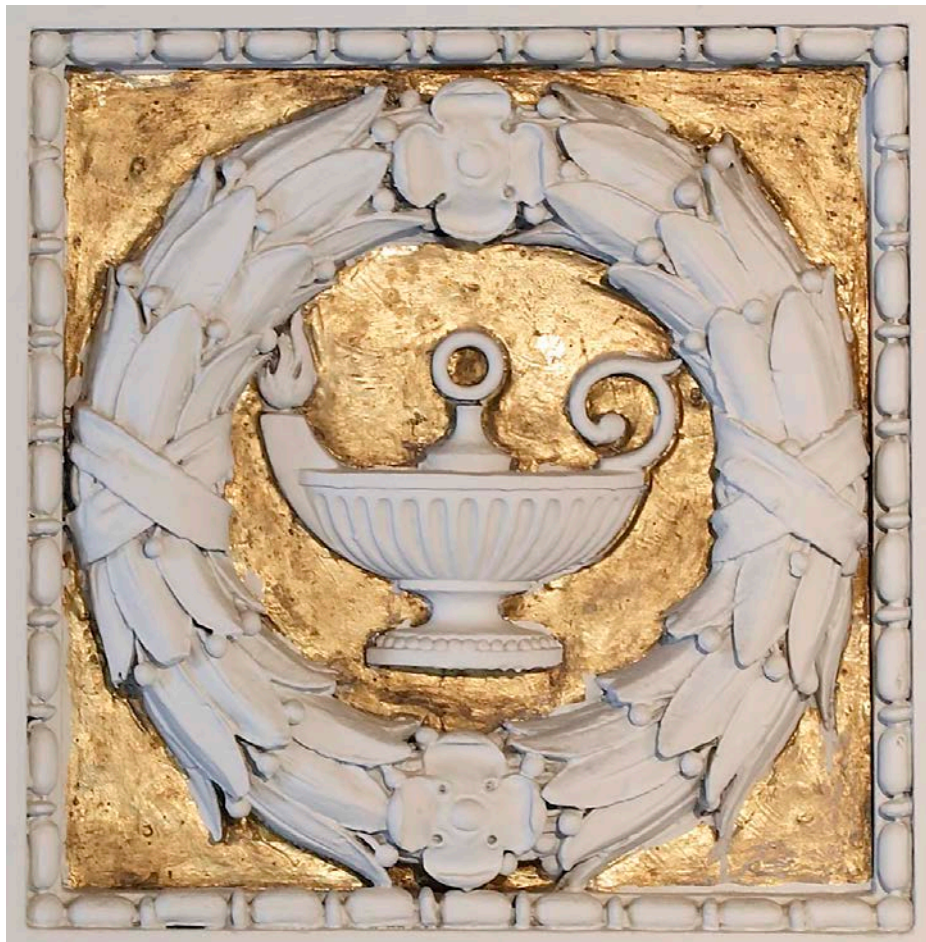
# LITERACY AWARDS

**LIBRARY  
OF CONGRESS**

# 2019

## Winners & Best Practice Honorees

Center for Learning, Literacy and Engagement



Highsmith, C.M., photographer. (2007) Detail of sculpted wreath surrounding lamp of learning. Library of Congress Thomas Jefferson Building second floor corridor, Washington, D.C.



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Highsmith, C.M., photographer. (2010) Circular Mural illustrating *Books, the Delight of the Soul*, by Edward J. Holslag. Library of Congress Thomas Jefferson Building Librarian's Room, Washington, D.C.



The three 2019 Library of Congress Literacy Award winners are:

**The David M. Rubenstein Prize: ProLiteracy Worldwide**

**The American Prize: American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults**

**The International Prize: ConTextos**

These organizations demonstrate the highest levels of effectiveness and commitment to literacy promotion. They have implemented model programs improving literacy awareness and proficiency in the United States and abroad. Based in Syracuse, New York (serving the U.S. and 25 developing countries), Baltimore (serving the U.S.) and Chicago (serving El Salvador), these exemplary organizations are serving the needs of blind children, adults and their families, gang-affected youth, and adult learners. Programs include professional development and technical assistance to literacy professionals, free braille books and programs that focus on reading, discussion of ideas and the writing of memoirs.

“Reading the applications for the David M. Rubenstein prize is simply awe-inspiring, for the breadth and impact of so many incredible literacy programs around the world. The Rubenstein prize both rewards and catalyzes phenomenal literacy work, whether more traditional or boldly innovative. I believe it is promoting a more audacious vision of what is possible for literacy initiatives and outcomes.”

Laura Bailet, Chair,  
David M. Rubenstein Prize

“American Prize applications represent a variety of engaging and effective programs provided by people who are serving their neighbors, helping them improve their lives through literacy. I continue to be heartened by the volunteers and professionals who work in these efforts across all sectors of our society.”

Karen Ristau, Chair,  
American Prize

“The creativity and proven effectiveness of the International Prize applications make them a pleasure to read and envision. This prize has made an impact on the international literacy community, influencing countries both large and small, particularly among the programs in the UNESCO best practices database.”

Benita Somerfield, Chair,  
International Prize

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# THE RUBENSTEIN PRIZE



## ProLiteracy®

**Location:**  
Syracuse, New York

**Service Area:**  
United States and 25  
developing countries

**Population Served:**  
Adult learners

**Founded:**  
2002

**Website:**  
[www.proliteracy.org](http://www.proliteracy.org)

*“ProLiteracy Worldwide, a stellar program that has advanced adult literacy best practices and advocacy for more than six decades, is a giant in literacy work and so deserving of the 2019 Rubenstein award. With its 1,000 U.S. member programs and 30 international partners, ProLiteracy has enabled millions of adults to achieve their literacy and life goals, resulting in a better future for themselves and their families.”*

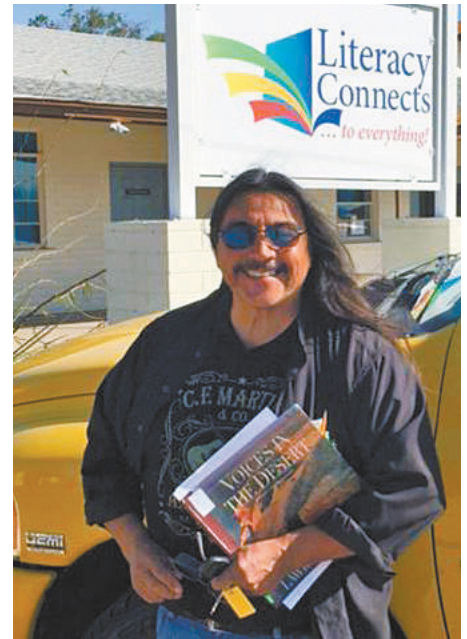
Laura Bailet, Chair,  
David M. Rubenstein Prize

## ProLiteracy Worldwide

ProLiteracy is a global literacy organization formed by the 2002 merger of Laubach Literacy International (founded in 1955) and Literacy Volunteers of America (founded in 1962). ProLiteracy believes in the transformative power of literacy and works to support and advance programs that help adults acquire the literacy skills they need to function more effectively in their daily lives.

ProLiteracy builds capacity among frontline literacy providers by modeling proven instructional approaches, developing affordable, evidence-based learning resources and providing professional development and technical assistance. ProLiteracy has more than 1,000 member programs across all 50 states and works with 30 partners in 25 countries to provide a wide range of adult literacy and basic education services to vulnerable populations.

For more than 60 years, ProLiteracy has scaled successful practices and driven advocacy efforts by activating our grassroots network, resulting in a broad and sustained effort to improve and advance adult literacy at the community level.



Photos courtesy of ProLiteracy Worldwide

## American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults

Established in 1919, the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults is a service agency that assists blind and deaf-blind persons in securing reading matter, educates the public about blindness, provides specialized aids and appliances to the blind and gives consultation to governmental and private agencies serving the blind. It also offers assistance to those losing vision in their later years, offers services to blind children and their parents and works toward improving the quality of life for the blind and deaf-blind. This includes services such as free braille books, free braille calendars and free white canes.



American Action Fund  
for Blind Children and Adults

**Location:**  
Baltimore

**Service Area:**  
United States

**Population Served:**  
Blind children and adults  
and their families

**Founded:**  
1919

**Website:**  
[www.actionfund.org](http://www.actionfund.org)



*“For 100 years, the AAF has been committed to literacy for the blind and deaf-blind. Their work continues today by promoting the foundational use of braille. AAF’s programs expand on the foundation by incorporating new and creative use of technology. It is a privilege to honor them.”*

Karen Ristau, Chair,  
American Prize



# THE INTERNATIONAL PRIZE



**Location:**  
Chicago

**Service Area:**  
El Salvador

**Population Served:**  
Gang-affected youth  
and children  
in public schools  
and detention

**Founded:**  
2010

**Website:**  
[www.contextos.org](http://www.contextos.org)

## ConTextos



ConTextos brings literacy to schools, prisons and communities in El Salvador through two programs: Soy Lector (I'm a Reader) and Soy Autor (I'm an Author). The Soy Lector Program trains local community members and teachers to develop libraries to encourage reading and the discussion of ideas in the community and schools. The Soy Autor Program encourages youth affected by violence to write their memoirs. Through this writing exercise, they work through the effect that violence has had on their life, either as a victim or perpetrator. In the process, participants develop critical literacy skills. The program has been replicated in Guatemala and Honduras and continues to grow. To date, ConTextos has created 84 libraries across El Salvador; 11,092 students have access to high-quality books; and 853 young authors have published their memoirs.

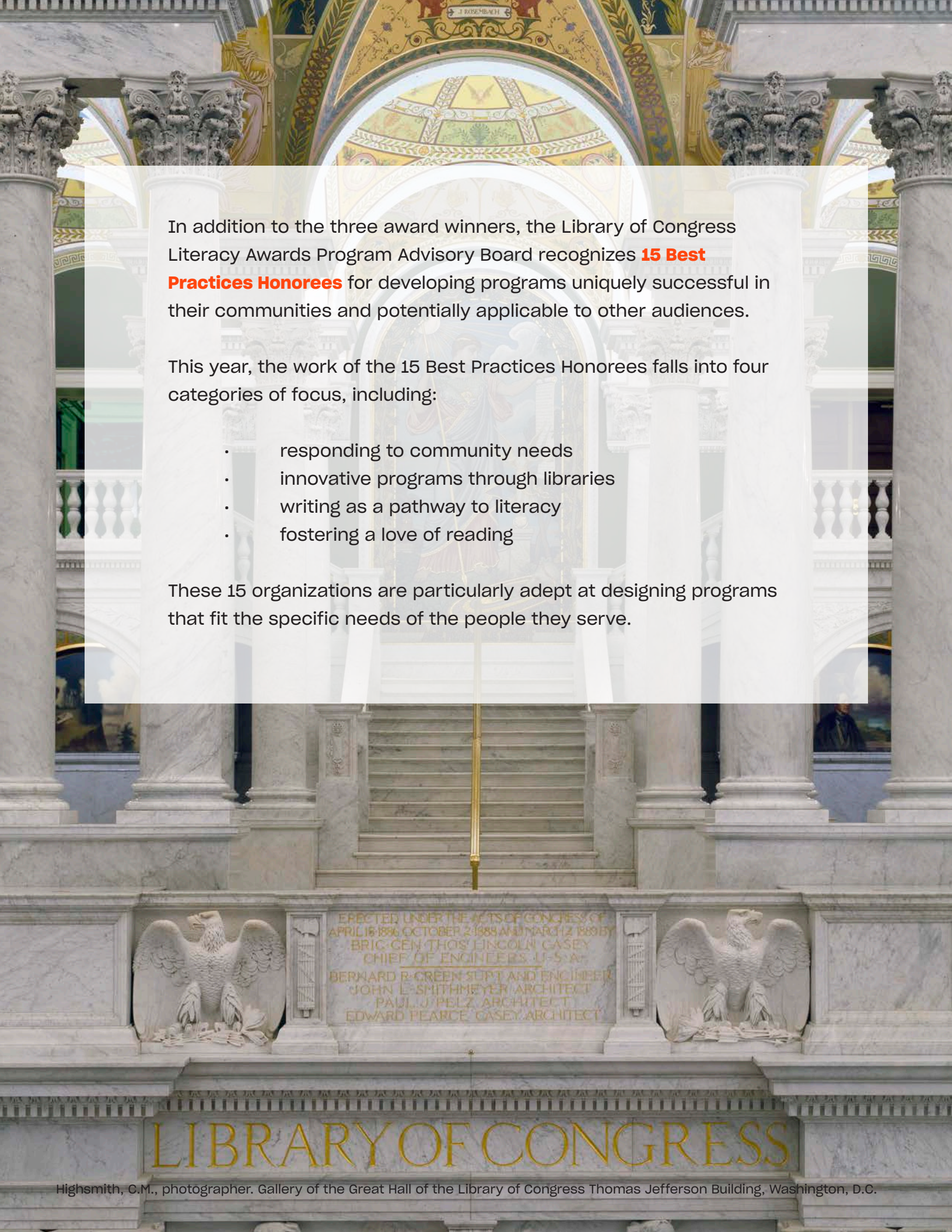
*"I was impressed by ConTextos' commitment to spreading the culture of reading, writing and dialogue beyond school and employment settings to create and sustain well-rounded citizens and positive communities."*

Benita Somerfield, Chair,  
International Prize



Photos courtesy of ConTextos





In addition to the three award winners, the Library of Congress Literacy Awards Program Advisory Board recognizes **15 Best Practices Honorees** for developing programs uniquely successful in their communities and potentially applicable to other audiences.

This year, the work of the 15 Best Practices Honorees falls into four categories of focus, including:

- responding to community needs
- innovative programs through libraries
- writing as a pathway to literacy
- fostering a love of reading

These 15 organizations are particularly adept at designing programs that fit the specific needs of the people they serve.



ERECTED UNDER THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF  
APRIL 16 1896 OCTOBER 2 1883 AND MARCH 12 1891 BY  
BRIG-GEN THOS LINCOLN CASEY  
CHIEF OF ENGINEERS U-S-A  
BERNARD R-GREEN SUPT AND ENGINEER  
JOHN L-SMITH MEYER ARCHITECT  
PAUL J PELZ ARCHITECT  
EDWARD PEARCE CASEY ARCHITECT



**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**



# RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY NEEDS

Organizations in Ohio, Massachusetts (serving Afghanistan) and South Africa are responding to the needs of pre-K through postsecondary students in various ways, including “Reading Parks,” storytelling in a student’s mother language and the creation of an all-girls K-12 education center.

*“The Best Practices Honorees were especially strong in their ability to respond to the needs of the communities they serve.”*

Benita Somerfield, Chair,  
International Prize



**Location:**  
Springfield, Ohio

**Service Area:**  
Greater Miami Valley/  
Southwest Ohio

**Population Served:**  
Pre-K through 12 students  
and families

**Founded:**  
2015

**Website:**  
[www.theconsciousconnect.org](http://www.theconsciousconnect.org)

## The Conscious Connect Inc.

Launched in 2016, The Conscious Connect Inc.’s mission is to reimagine and redevelop underutilized spaces for the purposes of education, culture, peace and health – so that zip codes do not define the success of children and families. Primarily operating across a 50-mile radius in South Springfield and West Dayton, Ohio, the organization’s grassroots approach has refocused the region’s conversation about education and imaginative possibilities. The Conscious Connect has distributed more than 47,000 books and created walking access for more than 23,000 individuals through 107 literary access points. This includes reading spaces in 65 barbershops and beauty salons; 28 free book kiosks at schools, daycare centers, churches and community centers; a cargo book bike that distributes books to often-neglected areas; and “Reading Parks,” which were once vacant or blighted areas that have been transformed into safe havens for children and families to enjoy reading and developmental activities.



Photo courtesy of The Conscious Connect





**Location:**  
Mowbray, Cape Town

**Service Area:**  
South Africa

**Population Served:**  
Children

**Founded:**  
2012

**Website:**  
[www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org)

## Nal'ibali Trust

Nal'ibali, “here’s the story,” in the isiXhosa language, is a national reading-for-enjoyment campaign to spark children’s potential through storytelling and reading. Children who are immersed in well-told stories in languages they understand become inspired and are motivated to learn and read for themselves.

The campaign values the power of mother language in literacy development and produces 15 editions of a bilingual newspaper story supplement in eight South African language combinations annually. Nal'ibali has nearly 4,000 active reading clubs, facilitated by over 19,000 volunteers nationwide.



Photo courtesy of Nal'ibali Trust

Nal'ibali reading clubs are supported with new stories on a regular basis, and families can tune into Nal'ibali’s radio stations to enjoy children’s stories in all 11 official languages. Nal'ibali also launched four mobile libraries in select townships in South Africa to increase access to children’s books.

## Razia’s Ray of Hope

Razia’s Ray of Hope Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 2007 that improves the lives of young women and girls through community-based education in the rural district of Deh’Subz, Afghanistan.

In 2008, Razia’s Ray of Hope opened its flagship program, the Zabuli Education Center, an all-girls K-12 school with 100 students. Today the school is thriving in its 11th year of operation, providing tuition-free education, school supplies, uniforms, shoes, coats, healthy meals and transportation to and from school to approximately 670 disadvantaged girls in a region with one of the lowest literacy rates in the world.



**Location:**  
Wellesley, Massachusetts

**Service Area:**  
Afghanistan

**Population Served:**  
Girls and young women in K-12 and postsecondary education

**Founded:**  
2007

**Website:**  
[www.raziasrayofhope.org](http://www.raziasrayofhope.org)

In 2017, Razia’s Ray of Hope opened the Razia Jan Institute, the first women’s postsecondary vocational school in this region of Afghanistan. It is a tuition-free, two-year midwifery training program emphasizing the importance of maternal and infant health while supporting health-sector employment for Afghan women.



Photo courtesy of Razia’s Ray of Hope

# INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS THROUGH LIBRARIES

Libraries in Connecticut, Puerto Rico, Idaho and Washington, D.C., are responding to the needs of children, immigrants and refugees, and the general public in both urban and rural settings. Innovative programs include establishing an after-school program called Linking, Learning, Belonging and Community, converting a shipping container into a “Tiny Library,” creation of a bilingual learning center, as well as the establishment of community libraries in rural areas.

*“As a librarian, I am so proud of the innovative programs being offered through libraries. They are helping make a difference in people’s lives every day.”*

Susan Hildreth, Chair,  
Literacy Awards Advisory Board



**Location:**  
Hartford, Connecticut

**Service Area:**  
Hartford

**Population Served:**  
Immigrants  
and Refugees

**Founded:**  
1893

**Website:**  
[www.hplct.org](http://www.hplct.org)

## Hartford Public Library



In response to an influx of refugees into the area in 2000, Hartford Public Library received funding from a local foundation to establish a dedicated program for immigrants and refugees, known as The American Place (TAP). Through its dedicated staff and strategic partnerships, TAP offers a comprehensive range of services that have steadily expanded over

the years. In collaboration with Hartford Public School’s Office for English Language Learners, Hartford Public addresses the complex needs of high-risk immigrant, non-English-speaking high school students who have been in the U.S. for three years or less. The after-school program Linking Learning, Belonging and Community provides an innovative setting -- inclusive, neutral and welcoming - that is fundamental to public libraries. This setting allows for key interventions: acceleration of academic English-language acquisition; deepening of social integration; and student engagement with learning experiences designed to address identity formation and civic connection.



Photos courtesy of Hartford Public Library





## The Jane Stern Community Library

Begun as a lending library by activist Jane Stern in 1974, The Jane Stern Community Library quickly became a bilingual learning center as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation on an island with no public library tradition.

Today the main library is unique in Puerto Rico for the breadth and depth of services provided in its meeting rooms, play areas and computer labs. Because 44% of Dorado's children live below the poverty level, The Jane Stern Community Library focuses on supplementing public school education, along with providing access to computers and job-skill training for all ages through courses ranging from basic computer use to an advanced IT curriculum.

The Library also operates six one-room "after-school" libraries, using spaces in elementary schools or churches in rural barrios of Dorado and neighboring municipalities. Each opens to the public from 3:00pm to 6:00pm echoing the main library's emphasis on computer use, good internet and programs for adults, teens and children.

**Location:**  
Dorado, Puerto Rico

**Service Area:**  
7 locations in Dorado,  
Vega Baja, Vega Alta  
and Toa Baja

**Population Served:** General  
public and public  
school children

**Founded:**  
1974

**Website:**  
[www.janesternlibrary.com](http://www.janesternlibrary.com)



Photos courtesy of The Jane Stern Community Library

# INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS THROUGH LIBRARIES



**Location:**  
Meridian, Idaho

**Service Area:**  
Meridian

**Population Served:**  
105,940 residents and  
a high concentration  
of Russian-speaking  
immigrant families

**Founded:**  
1924

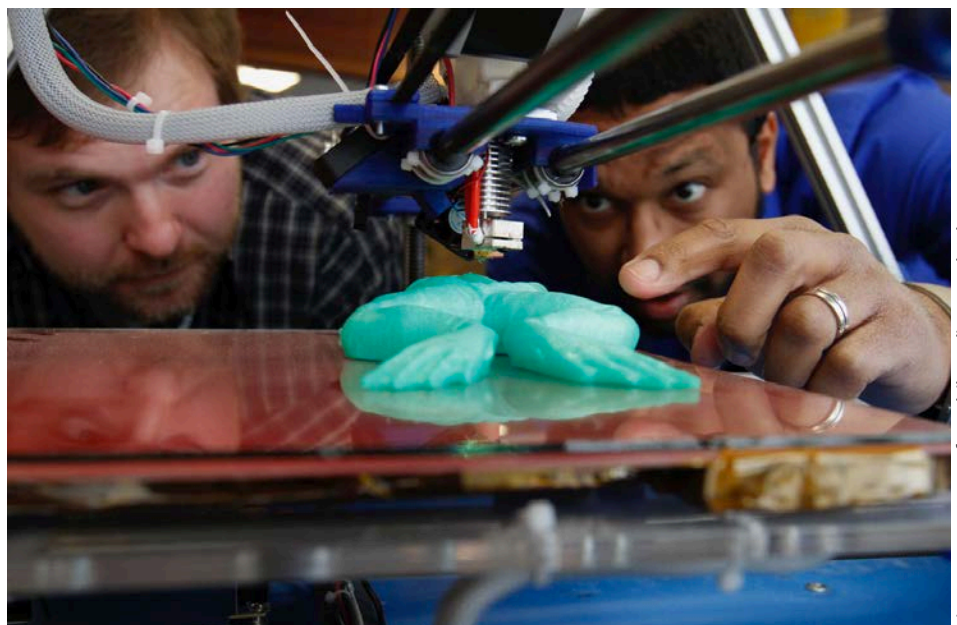
**Website:**  
[www.mld.org](http://www.mld.org)

## Meridian Library District



At the Meridian Library District, books are just the beginning, and branches are not just quiet places for learning. Serving the fastest-growing city of Idaho, the libraries focus their efforts on enriching lives, igniting curiosity and cultivating connections. MLD's programming includes a shipping container turned Tiny Library, a bicycle-lending program, a bookmobile and other services. Its branches are dynamic community centers that allow Meridian residents to come together around shared goals and interests.

When a resident-supported funding measure to build a new library failed to reach the 67% approval necessary to pass, library staff remained determined and used available funds to create an interactive childhood learning library inside a shipping container. The Meridian Tiny Library was inspired by the tiny-home movement and, because of its size, does things a bit differently -- the space itself is a program and largely self-service. When open, the location is staffed with librarians who foster the five early-learning practices: talk, sing, play, write and read.



Photos courtesy of Meridian Library District





**Location:**  
Washington, D.C.

**Service Area:**  
Guatemala and Honduras

**Population Served:** All ages

**Founded:**  
2000

**Website:**  
[www.riecken.org](http://www.riecken.org)

## Riecken Community Libraries



The Riecken Foundation provides access to information through 65 community libraries in rural, remote and often indigenous communities in Honduras and Guatemala. Free and open to all, each Riecken Community Library serves as a community hub, offering quality books and dynamic programs that support literacy development,

technology equipment and training, entrepreneurship, leadership development and preservation of cultural identity.

The Riecken sustainability model leverages strong partnership among a community, its municipality and the Riecken Foundation. High volunteer involvement is fundamental to the success of the Riecken model, and participation in local leadership is an outcome that strengthens the entire community.

More than 300,000 people of all ages - more than half women and girls - enter the doors of Riecken Community Libraries annually. Riecken Community Libraries improve the lives of those they serve by providing safe choices and otherwise unavailable opportunities to empower those in the community.



Photos courtesy of Riecken Community Libraries



# WRITING AS A PATHWAY TO LITERACY

These organizations in New York, Washington, D.C., and Massachusetts work with pre-K through college students and teachers in the United States and around the world, as well as teens in the criminal justice system. Some examples of writing opportunities as a pathway to literacy offered include weekly reading and writing programs, the use of storytelling tools, the provision of curricula and training for teachers and the establishment writing workshops for youth.

*“This year’s Best Practices Honorees represent a diverse group of literacy programs that, collectively, showcase what is possible when you combine deep passion with understanding of local literacy needs and innovative approaches.”*

Laura Baillet, Chair,  
David M. Rubenstein Prize



**Location:**  
New York City

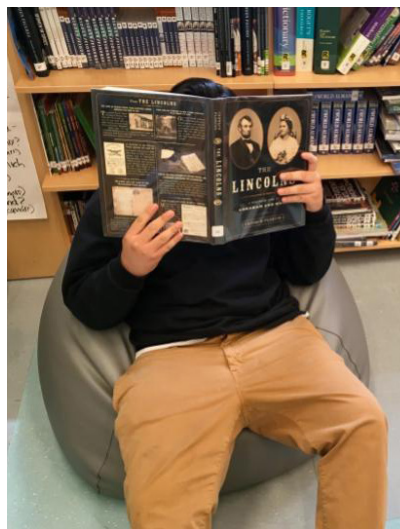
**Service Area:**  
New York state and other  
places as requested

**Population Served:**  
Teens in the criminal  
justice system

**Founded:**  
2009

**Website:**  
www.  
literacyforincarceratedteens.  
org

## Literacy for Incarcerated Teens



In 2009 Literacy for Incarcerated Teens (LIT) was formed to address the paucity of library services to incarcerated teens in New York. LIT’s mission is to strengthen the ability and desire of incarcerated youth to read.

LIT’s program success relies on its relationship with the New York City Department of Education’s Passages Academy and the New York State Office for Children and Family Services, whose teachers and librarians at the sites are essential. It has an active volunteer board that raises up to half of the annual budget.

Annually, LIT provides more than 2,000 books and magazine subscriptions to more than 1,500 detained teens. Titles are chosen for interest, readability and relevance. Weekly reading and writing programs are offered. LIT arranges visits by authors, who meet small groups of residents, read sections of their books and encourage discussions about issues raised.

These resources reinforce LIT’s aim to enrich the literacy opportunities for this underserved population.



Photos courtesy of Literacy for Incarcerated Teens



# LitWorld™

## LitWorld International Inc.

**Location:**  
New York City

**Service Area:**  
30 countries in North, South and Central America; Africa; the Middle East; and Asia

**Population Served:**  
Middle school-aged children and low-resource communities

**Founded:**  
2007

**Website:**  
[www.litworld.org](http://www.litworld.org)



LitWorld's mission is to strengthen kids and communities through the power of stories. We deliver scalable solutions that successfully address the complex challenges faced by underserved communities, utilizing literacy and storytelling tools to build empathy and resilience. Working in trusting partnerships, LitWorld produces sustainable outcomes for young people and families, affecting communities across the United States and in more than 30 countries around the world. LitWorld programs create connection, build understanding and cultivate confidence, leveraging literacy as a pathway for self-expression and change-making. This is achieved through its child-centered programs and campaigns, which underscore that when kids have access to spaces where they are free to explore their identities, discover their strengths, and express their dreams, they become empowered to create lasting change in their lives, in their communities and beyond.



© Monet Izabeth Ellastam

Photos courtesy of LitWorld International Inc.



# WRITING AS A PATHWAY TO LITERACY



## One World Education

One World Education reinvigorates research and writing instruction with proven programs that provide curricula and training for teachers and learning experiences for students. For the past five years, it has been one of the largest writing programs in the District, with 90% of participating schools making statistically significant gains, according to a recent World Bank evaluation. The organization's core One World Program takes place during the fall and supports schools by teaching research and argumentative writing skills. Students choose their own social justice issue topics. Engagement soars when they write about issues relevant to their own lives. One World then leverages that excitement to teach every step of the writing process. The organization also leads its own after-school One World Academy each spring, preparing students to participate in its citywide public speaking competition. This coming year, One World will work with the five largest adult learning programs in the District as well.



Photo courtesy of One World Education

**Location:**  
Washington, D.C.

**Service Area:**  
Washington metro area

**Population Served:**  
Middle and high school students and adult learners

**Founded:**  
2007

**Website:**  
[www.oneworldeducation.org](http://www.oneworldeducation.org)

## PEN/Faulkner Foundation

The PEN/Faulkner Foundation celebrates literature and fosters connections between readers and writers to enrich and inspire both individuals and communities. It achieves this mission through the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction, the largest peer-juried prize of its kind, and the PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in the Short Story; by convening public literary conversations that inspire vital civic dialogue between authors and members of the community about matters of urgent interest; and by bringing contemporary writers and free books into Washington public and public charter school classrooms for conversations with young students.



Photo courtesy of PEN/Faulkner Foundation

**Location:**  
Washington, D.C.

**Service Area:**  
Washington, D.C.

**Population Served:**  
More than 3,500 D.C. Public and Public Charter School students, more than 120 educators and teaching authors in more than 30 schools

**Founded:**  
1985

**Website:**  
[www.penfaulkner.org](http://www.penfaulkner.org)





**Location:**  
Amherst, Massachusetts

**Service Area:**  
Massachusetts

**Population Served:**  
Pre-K through college  
teachers, students  
and families

**Founded:**  
1993

**Website:**  
[www.umass.edu/wmwp](http://www.umass.edu/wmwp)

## Western Massachusetts Writing Project



Western Massachusetts Writing Project (WMWP), a National Writing Project affiliate, is sponsored by the University of Massachusetts Amherst English Department and College of Humanities and Fine Arts. WMWP provides professional development for teachers and literacy workshops for youth.

WMWP partners with Springfield Armory National Historic Site with strategic goals of involving teachers and affecting students through writing-based historical inquiry. For five summers, WMWP and the Armory have co-hosted free summer camps for Springfield students at the Armory, enabling diverse youth to access primary sources and understand that the site's story is their community's story.

WMWP's Youth Writing Adventure invites students and educators to the University of Massachusetts campus annually for a creative writing day. Young people experience college life and have opportunities to share their work with peers and eventually publish it. WMWP also offers weeklong summer Youth Writing Workshops that include writing, learning and visiting campus venues. This growing tuition-based program offers need-based scholarships.



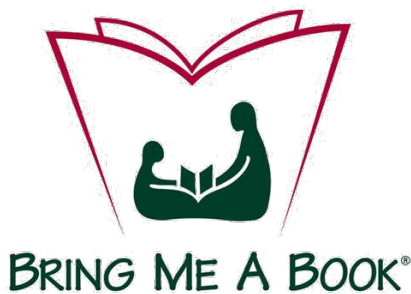
Photos courtesy of WMWP

# FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING

Organizations in California, Massachusetts and Vermont are promoting initiatives that foster a love of reading. They work with pre-K students through adults. Examples of their initiatives include book giveaway programs, the creation of mother-tongue books and the building of a community library that offers various literacy programs.

*“I was pleased to see the variety of approaches and programs the Best Practices Honorees employ to provide and sustain the fullness of what it means to be literate.”*

Karen Ristau, Chair,  
American Prize



## Bring Me a Book

Bring Me a Book provides book access to support kindergarten readiness and on-grade-level reading to under-resourced families and schools. It serves children zero through 8 through partners who inspire families, caregivers and teachers to read aloud with their children. Partners include nonprofits, preschools, K-3 schools, public libraries, health clinics and other community-based organizations. Founded in 1997 and originally focused in the San Francisco Bay Area, its programs have been replicated in Hong Kong, St. Louis and Franklin County, Florida.

Bring Me a Book selects books recommended by experts in children’s literature and engages volunteers to minimize administrative costs. Its book-giveaway programs include book collections for classrooms, clinics and community-based organizations; family book cubby workshops through partner organizations that have established relationships with families; volunteer “Book Buddies” who read quality books to children in schools and replenish classroom libraries; and a Rotary Speaker Book Program that provides books to classrooms.

**Location:**  
Redwood City, California

**Service Area:**  
San Francisco Bay Area, Hong Kong, Florida and St. Louis

**Population Served:**  
Low-income children ages 0-8 and their families

**Founded:**  
1997

**Website:**  
[www.bringmeabook.org](http://www.bringmeabook.org)



Photo courtesy of Bring Me a Book



## Friends of Matènwa Inc.

Photo courtesy of Friends of Matènwa Inc.



The Friends of Matènwa Inc. supports programs that offer Matènwa and the Haitian community opportunities to improve their education, health and welfare. One of the programs supported is the Matènwa Community School and the Mother Tongue Books (MTB) methodology.

Abner Sauveur and Chris W. Low created the Matènwa Community School in the remote mountain village of Matènwa on the island of La Gonâve, Haiti, in 1996. Schools owned

no books. With paper, colored pencils and a stapler, their students were encouraged to tell and illustrate their personal stories in their mother tongue, Creole, while their teachers listened, scribed, guided and applauded them. The MTB methodology highly motivates students by recognizing that their language, culture and personal experiences are worthy of being written down, read by all ages and discussed.



**Location:**  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

**Service Area:**  
Haiti and U.S.

**Population Served:**  
Pre-K students through adults

**Founded:**  
2010

**Website:**  
[www.matenwa.org](http://www.matenwa.org)



## Ready for Reading



Ready for Reading (RfR), a Rwanda-based nonprofit organization founded in 2008, is dedicated to teaching reading and literacy skills and providing learning opportunities for people of all ages. It believes literacy and education are a basic human right, the foundation for prosperity and, in Rwanda, lasting peace. In 2012, RfR opened the 7,800 square-foot Rwinkwavu Community Library with its outdoor

amphitheater, and it quickly became the community hub and a beacon of hope and opportunity in this underserved area.

Ready for Reading fosters an emerging culture of reading, using creative storytelling, music, basketball, computers and life skills programs to instill the idea that literacy and reading are powerful keys to a more productive, fulfilling and prosperous life. More than 900 people have graduated from RfR's literacy programs, positively affecting the lives of thousands of adults and children in the region. The Rwinkwavu Library has become the model for rural libraries in Rwanda.

**Location:**  
Dorset, Vermont

**Service Area:**  
Rwanda

**Population Served:**  
All ages in a remote underserved rural area

**Founded:**  
2008

**Website:**  
[www.readyforreading.org](http://www.readyforreading.org)

Photo courtesy of Ready for Reading

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Highsmith, C.M., photographer.  
Gallery of the Great Hall of the  
Library of Congress Thomas  
Jefferson Building, Washington, D.C.



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Highsmith, C.M., photographer. (2007) Detail of stucco reliefs around dome. Library of Congress Thomas Jefferson Building Librarian's Room, Washington, D.C.

# LITERACY AWARDS

**LIBRARY  
OF CONGRESS**

# 2019

Through the generosity of philanthropist David M. Rubenstein, the Library of Congress Literacy Awards Program recognizes nonprofit organizations that have made outstanding contributions to increasing literacy in the United States and abroad. The awards encourage the continuing development of innovative methods for combating illiteracy and the wide dissemination of the most effective practices. The Library of Congress Literacy Awards Program is administered by the Center for Learning, Literacy and Engagement at the Library of Congress.

#### About the Center for Learning, Literacy and Engagement

The Center is committed to creating safe, open and trusted environments for bringing diverse communities into conversation with the Library's collections, expertise and services through onsite, offsite and online offerings and networks that help meet audience needs and inspire sustained, lifelong engagement, learning and creativity.

#### About the Library of Congress

The Library of Congress is the world's largest library, offering access to the creative record of the United States—and extensive materials from around the world—both on site and online. It is the main research arm of the U.S. Congress and the home of the U.S. Copyright Office. Explore collections, reference services and other programs and plan a visit at [loc.gov](http://loc.gov), access the official site for U.S. federal legislative information at [congress.gov](http://congress.gov) and register creative works of authorship at [copyright.gov](http://copyright.gov).

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