



Hivemind

A NEW DAWN

Now that the dreadful year 2020 is safely in the rearview, it's time to look forward to 2021 with guarded optimism. The first few weeks of the new year have brought welcome news of vaccination rollouts, possible school re-openings, and maybe—if we squint hard—a light at the end of the tunnel. Many changes have been afoot at the Literacy Council, including numerous hellos and goodbyes (see pages 2, 3, and 4). We have had an influx of new tutors and new students and are working hard to onboard everyone as rapidly as possible. While we are still unable to work with students on-site in local Rowan-Salisbury elementary and middle schools, our program at North Rowan High School is now in its second semester and continues to be a game-changer in terms of student engagement and outcomes (see page 5). We anticipate a great need for tutoring by next fall as results of the pandemic year begin to be analyzed in detail. We continue to ramp up to meet that expected demand. Our Kentucky Derby with Hat-i-tude event is coming soon, so start thinking about your millinery confections and follow Rowan County Literacy Council on Facebook for all the details!

MILESTONES

Passed part of the GED: Student Mary Foutz has passed the English Language Arts portion of the GED on the first try! Mary has been working diligently with tutor Jennifer Hubbard and taking GALE courses at the library in order to prepare for the test. She had previously passed the Social Studies and now that she has aced the Language Arts test, she is moving on to Science and Math with tutor Thomas Long. Congratulations Mary on this major accomplishment!



One step closer! You can't see it but behind their masks, student Mary Foutz (left) and tutor Jennifer Hubbard are smiling from ear to ear after learning that Mary passed her Language Arts GED exam.



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TRADING PLACES

2020 brought many changes to the Rowan County Literacy Council, not the least of which were noteworthy staffing changes. In November, Executive Director KC Scott announced she would be leaving her post by the end of the year. Program Coordinator Laurel Harry agreed to move into the role of director in her place. Harry has been with the Literacy Council since 2017 and has an extensive background in writing, editing, training, software development/testing, and fundraising.

The two spent the rest of the year working on transition, and searching for a replacement Program Coordinator. Betsy Hood accepted the post and came on board as Program Coordinator in January 2021, bringing with her wealth of experience as a K-12 teacher and reading specialist.

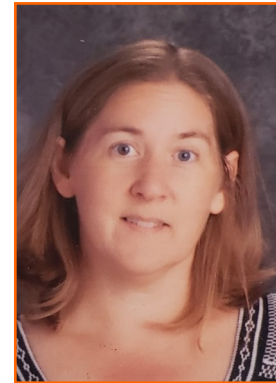
Betsy has jumped into her new role with enthusiasm and is busy learning the ropes of the Literacy Council. Her goals in the first few months at RCLC are to decrease the number of students on the waiting list and recruit new volunteers for both our adult and youth programs. Betsy is also tutoring an ABE student and supporting the North Rowan Tutoring program.

The musical chairs continued as Harry prevailed upon Scott to join the Board of Directors as Treasurer, replacing outgoing Treasurer Vance Meek. Harry said,



Clockwise from top left, New Executive Director Laurel Harry, former ED and current Treasurer KC Scott, and new Program Coordinator Betsy Hood.

"We are thrilled to have KC stay on as Treasurer. The institutional knowledge gained from her nearly five years as Executive Director is indispensable and has helped make the transition seamless."



*The idea is to write it so that people hear it and it slides through the brain and goes straight to the heart."
—Maya Angelou*

LIBRARY HQ HOURS

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9:00 am - 9:00 pm	9:00 am - 9:00 pm	9:00 am - 9:00 pm	9:00 am - 6:00 pm	9:00 am - 5:00 pm	9:00 am - 5:00 pm	Closed

UPCOMING RPL HOLIDAYS/CLOSURES

April 2	Closed—Good Friday
May 17	Closed—Memorial Day

BOARD MEMBERS CYCLE OFF

To everything there is a season, and this means we must bid adieu to several long-serving board members who have reached their term limits. **Melody Moxley** has been a stalwart on the board of directors for many years, serving both as President and Vice-President at different times. She has been a steady hand at the wheel and has given amply of her time, expertise, and baked goods. Treasurer **Vance Meek** is also exiting the board after having served capably as treasurer for many years. His knowledge of the ins and outs of the Scrabble Scramble are irreplaceable, so we will keep him on speed dial for the foreseeable future. **Gary Rash** has also reached his term limit, after many years as an active board member. We thank Gary for his generosity of time and spirit. Lastly, **Helen Peacock**, another former executive officer and champion of literacy, has also reached the end of her term. We are so grateful for the collective decades of time they have donated to advancing the cause of literacy in Rowan County. We take comfort in having them all as our organizational Obi Wan Kenobis for years to come.

Clockwise from top left: Gary Rash and student, Vance Meek at 2019 Tutor Appreciation event, Helen Peacock at Scrabble Scramble, Melody Moxley at RPL.



WALLACE & GRAHAM GIVES

The Rowan County Literacy Council announces the receipt of a \$5,000 grant from Wallace & Graham Gives, the philanthropic arm of local law firm Wallace & Graham, P.A. The grant, which was awarded in December 2020, will help support our programs for both youth and adult literacy.

Former Executive Director KC Scott said, "We are thrilled to have the support of Wallace & Graham. Their support will enable us to provide literacy programs such as our new Cavs After Hours partnership at North Rowan High School. The urgent need for such programs has been brought into stark relief by the COVID pandemic."

Wallace & Graham Gives supports "charitable causes close to the heart, for the benefit of our clients and our community," including many other local non-profits. Please join us in thanking Wallace & Graham for supporting literacy and for making Rowan County a stronger and more vibrant community.

CHANGES TO U.S. NATURALIZATION TEST

Effective Dec. 1, 2020, several significant changes were made to the process for becoming a naturalized citizen of the United States.

According to the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) website, "The revised test includes more questions that test the applicant's understanding of U.S. history and civics." The new test is also twice as long as the previous test. Applicants now must answer 12 of 20 questions correctly to pass the test. Previously they needed to answer six of ten questions correctly. The new questions include more "why" questions that require applicants to explain concepts rather than provide brief one- or two-word answers.

The new test items and study guides can be found on the Citizenship Resource Center on the USCIS website.

Students who submitted their citizenship applications before Dec. 1, 2020 will take the old version of the test. Students who submitted forms after Dec. 1 will take the new longer test.

USCIS also has a smartphone app that students can use to prepare for the test. Currently the app still contains study materials for the old version of the test.



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

The Buzz

ZOOM LICENSE DISCOUNTS FOR TUTORS

One of the many adaptations we have all made during the long months of COVID isolation, is the use of Zoom for meetings and family get-togethers. Likewise, Zoom turns out to be a great tool for remote tutoring, with the ability to screen share, jot down notes, interactively break words into syllables, and much more.

The Literacy Council has discounted Zoom license through our association with the ProLiteracy organization. Recently, ProLiteracy has extended this discount offer to apply to volunteers of member organizations as well.

Basic Zoom for short meetings with no more than two attendees is free, but if your Zoom needs require you to schedule longer or larger meetings, you may request the discounted by signing up using our ProLiteracy Member number. If you already have a Zoom license, you qualify for a refund. The discounted rate is almost 50% less than a standard Zoom license, so it's well worth the effort to switch your account over. For more information, please contact Betsy Hood at Youth-Program@rcliteracy.org and she will supply you with the details.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

RCLC is pleased to welcome Macon Stewart and Allison Doby to our Board of Directors.

Macon has a master's degree in social work and serves as the Deputy Director for Multi-System Operations for the Georgetown University Center for Juvenile Justice Reform. Macon serves as part of the Justice Consortium for the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. Locally, she is a member of the Salisbury NAACP and formerly served as Co-Chair for the Rowan County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council.

Allison grew up in Salisbury, graduating from East Rowan High School in 2002. After earning her bachelors degree from UNC Greensboro and masters degree from UNC Charlotte, Allison served as a school counselor at West Rowan and Salisbury high schools. She currently serves as the Director of Admission at Salisbury Academy. Allison enjoys hiking and spending time with her husband, Mark, and two children, Cate and Myers.



Macon Stewart (above) and Allison Doby (below)



NRHS ADDS DEDICATED TUTORING CENTER

Spoiler Alert: Odysseus does finally make it home in the end. If you haven't thought about Homeric poetry for a while, read on!

In the second quarter of the fall semester, we started a new program at North Rowan High School in response to a request for help from school administrators. Assistant Principal Rebecca Rolfsmeyer had been tracking student progress and noted that many students were not keeping up with their coursework—including English assignments on “The Odyssey” among other things—under the new quasi-remote or full-remote school schedule.

Under Plan B, students in the Rowan-Salisbury School system attend classes two days a week and the remainder of the week consists of distance-learning. Students were also given the option to attend school on a full-remote basis. Many students simply could not keep up with their workload without one-on-one help.

Over 20 tutors answered the call to help students who

were struggling in one or more classes. Tutors were able to meet with students in person, or over a proctored Zoom link. Initially the students attended tutoring during an after-school program called Cavs After Hours, but for the beginning of this semester, NRHS Principal Meredith Williams decided to expand the program to create an dedicated space for an in-school tutoring center. Now tutors have the option of coming after school **or** during the school day to work with students in person. They may also still meet with students over Zoom by pre-arrangement with school administration.

“For some students, tutoring will be the difference between passing and not passing, between graduating and not graduating,” said RCLC Director Laurel Harry. “The need is urgent and the time to help is right now.”

If you want to help students learn how Odysseus got home, or help with Science, Math, History, or a host of other subjects, contact Betsy Hood at YouthProgram@rcliteracy.org to learn how to get involved.



Tutor Laurel Harry works with a Spanish-speaking student at North Rowan High School on English I coursework.

RCLC WHO'S WHO

2020 Board of Directors:

Don Doering-President

Nan Lund-Vice-President

Maggie Blackwell-Secretary

KC Scott-Treasurer

Wen Ye

Scott Maddox

Davian Ellison

Kelly Freeze-RCCC Representative

Macon Stewart

Allison Doby

Administration:

Laurel Harry-Executive Director

Betsy Hood-Program Coordinator

BY THE NUMBERS...

85%

The average **instructor retention rate** is 85%.

—ProLiteracy Annual Statistics Report,
2019-2020

60

Number of currently active tutors. We are on the lookout for new volunteers, as the need for youth tutoring by next fall will be staggering. Each one, teach one! Visit www.rcliteracy.org or call 704-216-8266 for more information on getting started.

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Number of students currently on RCLC's adult waiting list. We have new students signing up daily for our adult ABE and ESL programs. If you have 90 minutes a week to help one of these students, please let us know.

Rowan County Literacy Council

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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

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Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5