



## SHIFTING STRATEGIES FOR CHANGING TIMES

**DURING THE 2019-20 ACADEMIC YEAR, LEC LITERACY TUTORS SERVED NEARLY 300 ELEMENTARY STUDENTS IN 25 SCHOOLS THROUGHOUT THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA.** Elementary school represents the formative learning period for a child where problem solving, critical thinking, time management and social protocols are established. These skills are foundational to their future success and are cultivated primarily through formal and informal in-school instruction.

Although many educators contend that online learning can pose a threat to the normal academic and social developmental rhythm of young children, the COVID-19 pandemic forced school districts throughout the country to implement virtual learning strategies as a viable instructional alternative. Some researchers and educators are even predicting that online learning will one day be the primary mode of instruction for students.

When the pandemic upended the 2019-20 academic year in March 2020, we began to explore how it might impact the LEC literacy initiative in the short term. But by the end of June, while everyone was adjusting to their new normal, it became apparent that we needed to adjust our program delivery mode to an online format.

The successful LEC literacy model involves one-on-one weekly tutoring which is crucial to building a meaningful rapport with students and allows tutors to monitor their progress in reading fluency, writing, sight words and letter recognition, sounds and, of course, reading comprehension. The question was clear: how might we alter the LEC program and maintain the integrity of the one-to-one connection?

After several hours of research, consultation and experimentation, a virtual program evolved enabling tutors to provide literacy support to students online. LEC virtual literacy tutoring also allows coordinators to oversee the work of tutors during each session and, if needed, they can interact with the teacher, student and supervising adult as well.

After training the coordinators and tutors, we are piloting our virtual program in selected partner schools and will expand to the remaining schools over the next few months. For some volunteers the transition from in-school to remote learning is an arduous task, for others it is a timely and prudent response. Most agree that the investment has been well worth the time and effort. Using available innovative technology like Zoom, Google Classroom and other internet-based literacy programs, we are able to continue helping our most vulnerable children advance in reading proficiency, which is foundational to positive self-esteem and academic success.

Despite the pandemic and the many restrictions implemented for our safety, the new virtual program will allow tutors to continue to cheer students on as they progress in their reading, thus ultimately securing their chances of a



hopeful and prosperous future. We are also in the process of developing an online literacy program designed to give parents tools to support their children.

My son, Kevin H. Turpin II, president of the National Journal located in Washington DC., shared some wisdom in an article featured in the Washington Life Magazine that I think is worth repeating, he said, "Static organizations do not last; to keep an organization growing, you have to always stay connected to changing challenges." Today, we are committed to allowing change and challenges to motivate us and trust that we are responding well to the shifts caused by an unexpected pandemic. We are now positioned to serve in new and innovative ways, better equipped to impact 1000's of children both in school settings and in other local, national and international remote locations. Isn't that exciting!!!

*Kevin H. Turpin*  
**President**

*If you are interested in tutoring a first or second grade student from your home or office, please contact the Life Enrichment Center at 757-623-6001 or email [info@lecliteracy.org](mailto:info@lecliteracy.org).*





## JEFFERSON HOUSTON PREK-8 TUTORING PROGRAM Alexandria, VA

The LEC launched its first literacy tutoring program at Jefferson Houston PreK-8 School in late fall, 2019. The Alexandria Police Department embraced the mission of the LEC immediately and encouraged the involvement of all its officers." Captain Shannon Soriano also invited the Alexandria Sheriff's Office to participate in the program.

Several law enforcement officers tutored a child one hour a week and, in the process of impacting the life of a child,

to their surprise they were personally changed through their weekly commitment.

A special thank you to Captain Soriano for her efforts in recruiting a fine group of officers and deputies to participate in the program. We are also grateful for Katie Surman who provided oversight of the program as the LEC coordinator. Because of these individuals, the launch was a huge success!!



*Norfolk Police Department*



*Norfolk Sheriff's Office*



*Newport News Sheriff's Office*



*Portsmouth Police Departmet*

## NOBLE AWARDS

The National Organization of Black Law Enforcement (NOBLE) Executives and the Life Enrichment Center are teaming up to recognize the efforts of the Norfolk and Portsmouth Police Departments as well as the Norfolk and Newport News Sheriff's Offices for their volunteer literacy tutoring in Title I schools in their respective cities. Combined, over the past five years, they have provided 5000+ volunteer hours helping children become proficient readers. The officers are effective in forming life changing relationships with their students, some of which are inspired to become law enforcement officers when they grow up.

Many of the officers volunteer in the schools that are in close proximity to the neighborhoods that they serve. The rapport that is built as a result of the in-school tutor-student interaction will invariably have a positive impact on the encounters that police and neighborhood children have in the community. In addition to ensuring that children have the tools needed to succeed academically and in life, the LEC is privileged to play a role in creating a bridge between law enforcement and the young children and parents in the communities that they serve.

**Congratulations to the Norfolk and Portsmouth Police Departments and the Norfolk and Newport News Sheriff's Offices for their fine work in the schools and community. You are making a difference in the lives of children and changing communities for the good, one relationship at a time.**



## LEC 2020 FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

This fall, LEC awarded the first scholarship to a student who participated in the LEC 2011 Summer Program. The criteria includes a 3.2 or higher high school GPA, enrollment in a college or university, demonstrated integrity, and three references. The scholarship will be awarded yearly at the annual LEC Banquet. We are pleased to congratulate Emeana McDonald for being the first student to receive the LEC Foundation Scholarship.



## LEC 2020 TUTOR OF THE YEAR

Each year outstanding tutors are selected to receive the Tutor of the Year Award. The persons selected have tutored for five or more years and have demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to the LEC's mission to help improve the literacy scores of children. They are faithful and creative in their efforts to turn on the "literacy light" for their students. Alexia Decker, William "Bill" Johnson and Danica Royster are the 2020 LEC Tutors of the Year.



## LEC 2020 PARTNER OF THE YEAR

The Newport News Sheriff's Office has been selected to be the LEC Partner of the Year. They became an active partner of the Life Enrichment Center in the Fall of 2017. In the middle of my initial meeting to introduce the program to Sheriff Gabe Morgan, he stopped me and asked, "What do we need to do to get involved?" He proceeded to tell me that the trajectory of his life was changed by a tutor—so he was convinced of the power

of tutoring our youth. Sheriff Morgan has mobilized deputies and civilians from his office to tutor one child, one hour a week for one academic year at McIntosh Elementary School and Hidenwood Elementary School in Newport News, Virginia. We congratulate Sheriff Morgan and his deputies and staff for their fine work in Newport News schools and for their commitment to enrich the lives of underserved children for a brighter tomorrow.





# GIVING:

## Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit Allocation

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) administers the Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) allowing individuals and businesses to receive state tax credits for donations to approved nonprofit organizations that provide scholastic instruction or scholastic assistance to low-income persons or eligible students with a disability.

In return for their contributions, businesses, trusts and individuals may receive tax credits equal to 65 percent of the donation that may be applied against their state income tax liability.



## Application Information

Approved NAP organizations and individuals are awarded allocations of tax credits for a 12-month period (July 1 – June 30). For more information regarding the Neighborhood Assistance Program and details about the criteria for becoming an approved NAP organization please visit Virginia Department of Social Services.

# WALMART GRANT

In June 2020, Walmart awarded a \$15,000 grant to the Life Enrichment Center to help fund the LEC Virtual Literacy Tutoring Program and to ensure that students in our partner Title I schools have the technology needed at school and in their homes to experience success through online learning. Walmart has been a trusted partner of the LEC since 2018 when they funded a Technology and Literacy Lab at Norview Elementary School in Norfolk, Virginia.



*Enriching Lives For  
A Brighter Tomorrow...*

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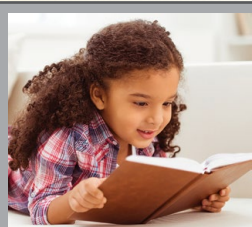
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