

# who we are

The Washington Literacy Center (WLC) has been **helping DC residents with the greatest barriers and fewest resources learn to read** since 1963. Starting off as an all-volunteer initiative, the WLC has grown into a dynamic nonprofit with full-time staff, professionally-trained instructors, and passionate volunteers.

**We began more than 50 years ago with a mission:**

*to provide students with direct instruction in reading and spelling skills so learners can enter a GED program or job-training*

It's just not possible to make one's way in today's world without the ability to read. For 90,000 of DC's adults, low literacy skills are a barrier to just about everything – completing their education, getting and keeping a decent job, staying out of poverty.

Professional, part-time educators provide individual attention in groups of 8-10, while a case manager connects students with the next steps they will take in their long-term education.

[www.washlit.org](http://www.washlit.org)



1816 12th st nw  
washington, dc 20009  
(202) 387-9029

where lives  
change

[www.washlit.org](http://www.washlit.org)



washington  
literacy  
center

where lives  
change

[www.washlit.org](http://www.washlit.org)

Board of Zoning Adjustment  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO. 20018  
EXHIBIT NO. 5A

## The Literacy Barrier

WLC is one of three non-profits in the District of Columbia that focus solely on providing educational and other services to adults functioning at the lowest literacy levels. Unfortunately, all of these entities including WLC have experienced a significant or complete reduction in funding.

**90,000**

Approximate number of illiterate adults in DC (2014 OSSE Report)

**\$8,333**

Annual Average Cost per student

**293**

Students waitlisted at WLC due to lack of funding

**20**

Average number of months to educate a low literacy student

**12%**

DC residents with less than a high school diploma

**5%**

Adults enrolled in Adult Basic Education programs

**3**

Institutions serving lowest literacy adults

## Make A Difference

### Volunteer

- Administrative
- Tutor/Instructor/Teacher Assistant
- Fundraising
- Events

### Advocate

- Write letters to support WLC funding
- Help us educate others about the adult literacy crisis
- Invite us to speak at your meetings and events

### Donate

- There are three easy ways to give:
- **By Text.** Text 501-55 and type keyword: washlit  
Enter donation amount.
  - **Go Online.** Visit our website, [www.washlit.com](http://www.washlit.com), and donate.
  - **By Check.** Make the check payable to Washington Literacy Center and mail to:  
*Washington Literacy Center  
1816 12th St NW  
Washington, DC 20009*

## The Curriculum

### Intensive

The Intensive course is for students reading between the beginner-and approximately second-grade level when they enter. It is paced entirely by student mastery of the material. Students learn the basics of reading, spelling, writing and comprehension.

### Just Words

Just Words is for students reading between approximately the third-to fifth-grade levels when they enter. Reading, writing concepts, word structure, vocabulary, and comprehension are emphasized.

**Literacy for Non-English speakers**  
**Speaking and Reading Skills**  
**Youth Education**  
**Workforce Development**

### Electives

- Computer Training/Digital Literacy
- Life Skills
- Math Instruction
- Drivers License Test Prep

why  
we need

you  
can help

what  
we offer



*"If you can't read, it messes with your emotions. Some people are great people, but the issue they have is overwhelming and consumes their life. That's why I'm here."*



1816 12th St NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
(202) 387-9029  
[www.washlit.org](http://www.washlit.org)



*"I understand the longer you live, the more you understand what is important. What you may think is important about life often isn't."*

## Statement on Literacy and Workforce Development

Literacy is a set of skills, strategies, and techniques for encoding and decoding language, but for many people with learning disabilities traditional methods of teaching literacy simply do not work. Washington Literacy Center is here to fill that gap for District adults struggling to read.

Our students are among the most unemployed and undertrained in the District of Columbia which translates into high rates of homelessness, poverty, food insecurity, and incarceration. It is apparent that our students need workforce and literacy skills to bring them closer to social parity.

Teaching these workforce skills presents a problem for most workforce development and upskilling organizations. Our students are often not just impaired in reading – their dyslexia or other learning disability makes it necessary for them to be taught other subjects in ways similar to the techniques that have proven successful in teaching them to read. WLC has already implemented these techniques into their elective offerings - Digital Literacy, Driver's Knowledge Training, and Math – with success. This targeted teaching is something they cannot get anywhere else in the District of Columbia.

Literacy is not an ability that can be learned solely in a classroom through rote memorization – it requires practice in a variety of contexts. By providing supplemental instruction in workforce skills, digital literacy, driver's education, and other areas we can provide students a safe laboratory in which they can practice their literacy skills in new contexts while learning vital life skills that go beyond literacy. For our students the main discovery for them is not merely literacy, it's that they are able to learn at all, when taught in a way that accommodates their disability.



# Washington Literacy Center Programs

2016-2017

Washington Literacy Center (WLC) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization based in the District of Columbia. WLC works to improve the basic reading skills for District adults who have struggled with the reading process throughout their education and their lives. Our curriculum includes several core classes focused on literacy skills and elective courses to supplement our students' learning.

## **Intensive**

The Intensive course is for students reading between the beginner- and approximately second-grade level when they enter. It is taught by certified teachers in small groups and is paced entirely by student mastery of the material. Students learn the basics of reading, spelling, writing and comprehension using research-based, multi-sensory techniques which were designed for people with reading disabilities.

Occupational literacy skills, such as planning, searching, and applying for employment, workplace safety and communication skills, are also incorporated into the lessons.

*The Intensive course meets four times a week. Classes are 2 hours long.*

## **Just Words**

The Just Words course is for students reading between the second and fourth grade level when they enter. It is taught by certified teachers in small groups and is paced entirely by student mastery of the material. Students learn the basics of reading, spelling, writing and comprehension using research-based, multi-sensory techniques which were designed for people with reading disabilities.

Occupational literacy skills, such as planning, searching, and applying for employment, workplace safety and communication skills, are also incorporated into the lessons.

*The Just Words course meets four times a week. Classes are 2 hours long.*

## **Electives**

*Enrolled WLC students have access to elective courses to supplement their core literacy class.*

## **Digital Literacy**

This class is for students who want to start using computers or improve their existing skills. Topics covered include: using the keyboard and the mouse, typing, word processing, saving, navigating to files and folders, using web browsers, using search engines, registering for email, and using email. At the end of the class all students who successfully completed the course receive a "Certificate of Completion."

## **Driver's License Knowledge Test Class**

This class is for students interested in taking their Driver's License Test. Students learn signs and symbols of the road, talk through common driving scenarios, and take practice tests as a group. There is no actual driving involved in the course.

## **Math Literacy**

To ensure our students have the math skills they need to succeed at work and life, the WLC will offer small-group math classes. Students are given a pre-test to assess their current math skills and then are placed in an appropriate class as determined by their current math level.

## **Occupational Literacy**

Incorporated into all of our courses are a number of units on life skills, designed to empower our students to be successful in their communities, families, and careers. The Student Services Specialist works directly with Instructors and Students to design and teach: Goal Setting, Self-advocacy, Boundaries, Self-Care, Transition Planning and Next Steps.

## **Speech Pathology Clinic**

WLC offers a Speech Pathology Clinic in partnership with George Washington University. For 6-8 weeks in the Fall and Spring, Speech Pathology graduate interns work with students in very small groups on speech pathology issues to improve both speech and reading.

**Washington Literacy Center strives to constantly improve and expand our class offerings. Contact us for the most up-to-date class offerings.**



# Literacy in the District

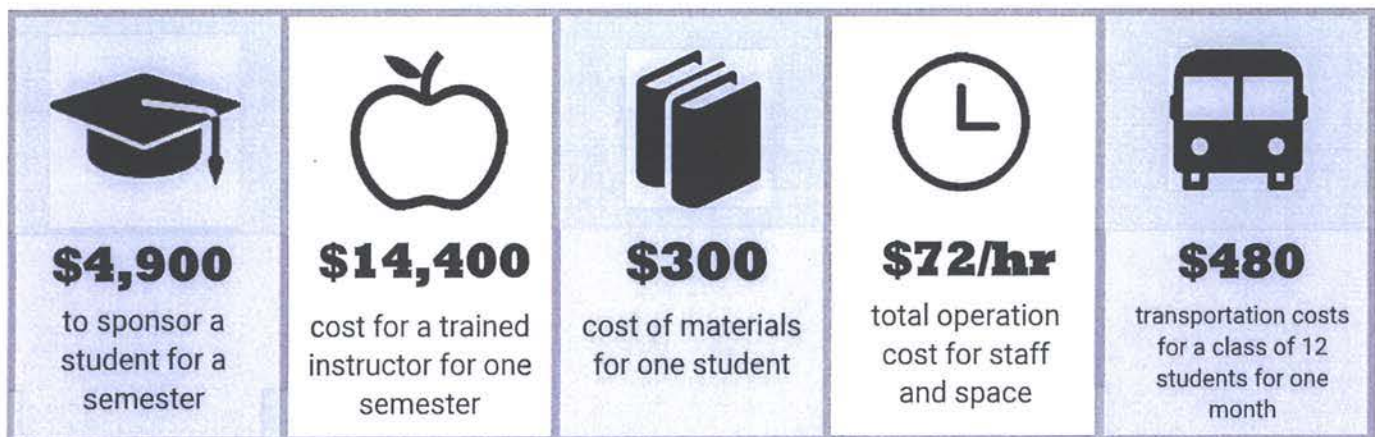
## What is the problem?

Washington, DC enjoys one of the highest educational attainment rates in the country, with 50% of the Washington metro region holding a Bachelor's degree or higher. However this isn't the entire story. According to OSSE's 2015 Transition State Plan, a significant proportion of DC residents lack basic literacy, numeracy, English language, problem solving and digital literacy skills needed to be successful in their careers and lives. Although no recent research has been done about adult illiteracy in the District, research from 2003 indicated that approximately 90,000 District adults were reading below the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level. This skill gap has contributed to the District's high unemployment rate, income inequality, and intergenerational poverty.

The problem continues to grow. According to the Georgetown Public Policy Institute, jobs in Washington are requiring more training and educational skills than ever, widening the skills gap for District adults already left out of the labor market.

## What is the solution?

Washington Literacy Center is a re-entry point to education for District adults in need of basic skills to enter the workforce. Adult literacy and job readiness skills for the low-literacy adults takes commitment and resources.





# COMMUNITY OUTREACH DAY MAY 22, 2019

East of the River Family Strengthening Collaborative  
3917 Minnesota Ave NE, Washington, DC 20019

---

Gift Cards | Door Prizes | Have to be Present to Win  
Bring your Children | Bring your Timesheets  
Sign-up for the CASAS Assessment & Certification Classes

---

**Coming to the neighborhood near YOU!**

For more information email: [info@washlit.org](mailto:info@washlit.org) or call (202) 387-9029

# Spring is the time to Grow!



## DYNAMIC WORKFORCE EDUCATION COURSES

WLC will help you to reach your goals in 9 weeks!!

- Financial Literacy
- Customer Service for the 21st Century
- Resume Writing and Job Searching Skills
- Effective Communication & Writing Skills for the Workforce
- Basic Literacy for Workforce
- Digital Literacy
- 21st Century Workforce Skills
- Workforce Mathematics and Application
- English-Language Learners: Vocabulary, Listening, and Reading
- Verbal Skills for the Workforce

Enhancing your skills for the future.

**REGISTER TODAY!!**

Where: Washington Literacy Center  
1816 12th St., NW – Basement Level  
Washington, DC 20009

To register please email: [info@washlit.org](mailto:info@washlit.org)  
or call (202)387-9029



**Washington Literacy Center  
2017-2018 Students by DC Ward**

